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A Father's Reflections

by JOHN M. DRESCHER

"What have you learned from your own experience and through counseling parents? What should I have done differently? I have young children. If your children were small again what would you do?"

These words burst from the burning heart of a father sitting across from me. His eyes pleaded for help. He was suffering the awful, empty, death-like feeling a father senses when his son has strayed. He felt he had failed as a father.

And this father's words stay with me. Although they came to me in a direct and blunt way that day they are not the words of a lone father. In them are questions which are uppermost in the minds of many parents, if they take parenthood seriously.

What has experience in counselling taught me? Where would I put the emphasis if my children were small again? I've pondered these questions and some things have surfaced.

Love of Child's Mother

If I were starting my family again I would love the mother of my children more. That is, I would be more free to let my children see that I love her. It is so easy for parents to assume love, to take each other for granted and so let a dullness creep in which can dampen the deepest love.

After speaking on family relationships to a large group of fathers and mothers a father approached me and said, "If I understand you this evening you said the greatest thing I can do for my child is to love his mother. Is that correct?" "That is correct", I answered. When a child knows parents love each other there is a security, stability and sacredness about life which is gained in no other way. A child who knows parents love each other and who hears them expressing words of love for each other needs little explanation about God's character of love or the beauty of sex.

To let my child know I love his mother I would seek to be faithful in doing little loving things for her. True love is visible. I would show special kindnesses such as opening the car door, placing her chair at the table, giving her little gifts on special occasions and writing her love letters when I'm gone from home. I would take her hand as we stroll in the park. And I would whisper loving words about her in the ears of my children. I would praise her in the presence of my children.

Does all this sound sentimental? Then I am persuaded many families need more of this kind of sentimentalism. Love is like a plant. It needs nurture. We must do the things love dictates or it will die.

Listen to My Child's Concerns

If I were starting my family over again I would do more listening. Most fathers find it hard to listen. We are busy with the burdens of work. We are often tired when we arrived home from work. A child's talk seems like chatter and unimportant. Yet we can learn so much more by listening than by talking — especially from our children.

I would listen when my child shares his little hurts and complaints, his joys and what he is excited about. I remember as clear as the day it happened, the time my busy father listened to me, as a first grader, when I came home frightened over a situation at school. His calmness and concern, demonstrated in listening to me, relieved my fears. I was ready to return the following day full of courage and confidence. Had he simply said my fear was foolish or had he refused to hear me out, my fears would have grown.

I would seek to keep from staring into space when my child is talking to me. I would try to understand what my child says because I now believe that the father who listens to his child, when he is small, will find that he will have a child who cares what his father says later in life. I now believe there is a vital relationship between listening to a child's concerns when he is small and the extent to which the child will share concerns with his father when he is in his teens. The father who takes time to understand what his child says when the child is small will be able to understand his child later in life.

If my child were small again I would stop reading the newspaper when he wants to talk with me. And I would try to refrain from words of impatience at the interruption. Such times can be the best times to show love and kindness.

One evening a small boy tried to show his father a scratch on his finger. Finally after repeated attempts to gain his father's attention, the father stopped reading and said impatiently, "Well, I can't do anything about it, can I?" "Yes, Daddy," his small son said. "You could have said 'Oh'".

In listening I would pay more careful attention to my child's questions. It is estimated the average child asks 500,000 questions by the age of fifteen. What a privilege for every parent — a half million opportunities to share something about the meaning of life.

These early years are the years for teaching. And by the time the child reaches fifteen parents have done most of their teaching. By fifteen the child knows what the parents believe. From now on parent's primary opportunity is to be available when the child comes for help.

Give a Feeling of Belonging

If I were starting my family again I would seek to use as many opportunities as possible to give my child a feeling of belonging. A sense of belonging is essential for a child's security and feeling of worth. And when a child feels he belongs in his family and is of real worth there, it is not a big step to also feel accepted, loved, and of worth to others and in God's sight.

How are feelings of belonging generated? By doing things together. By sharing common concerns and trusting each other with responsibilities. Celebrations of birthdays, when the person rather than the gifts is central, create a sense of belonging. A sense of belonging is built into the child when prayers are prayed on his behalf, when his opinions are valued and when he is included in the serious and fun experiences of the family. He feels he belongs when he is invited to be involved in the responsibility and work of the family. No part of child guidance is more important than assuring the child by action and word that he is important for the family and he has a place in the affections of the family.

Snow may mean misery if you have to drive your car, for the youth it means excitement.

Praise My Child

If I were starting my family over again I would seek to be more free to express words of appreciation and praise. Children are reprimanded for making mistakes. But many children seldom hear words of commendation and encouragement when they do a job well or exhibit good behaviour.

Will Sessions, discussing the topic "If I had a Teenager" says, "I would bestow praise. If the youngster blew a horn I would try to find at least one note that sounded good to my ear, and I would say a sincere good word about it. If the school theme was to my liking, I would say so, hoping that it would get a good grade when it was turned in. If his choice of shirt or tie, of socks or shoes, or any other thing met my liking, I would be vocal."

Probably no other thing encourages a child to love life, to seek accomplishment and to gain confidence, more than proper, sincere praise-not flattery but honest compliments when he does well.

Take More Time with My Child

If I were starting my family again I would plan to take time to do more things together. In every father's week there are one hundred sixty-eight hours. He probably spends about forty hours at work. Allow another fifteen hours for driving to and from work each week, overtime and lunch. Set aside fifty-six hours per week for sleep. That leaves a father fifty-seven hours each week to spend elsewhere. How many are actually spent with his family?

A group of three hundred seventh and eighth grade boys kept accurate records of how much time their fathers actually spent with them over a two week period. Most saw their father only at the dinner table. A number never saw their father for days at a time. The average time father and son were alone together for an entire week was seven and one half minutes.

Arthur Gordon tells an interesting experience from his youth. "When I was around thirteen and my brother was ten, Father had promised to take us to the fair. But at lunch there was a phone call: some urgent business required his attention downtown. My brother and I braced ourselves for the disappointment. Then we heard him say, 'No, I won't be down. It will have to wait.'

"When he came back to the table, Mother smiled. 'The fair keeps coming back you know.'

"'I know,' said Father. 'But childhood doesn't.'"

A prominent business man asked a friend, "Would you like to know what I am giving my son for Christmas?" He showed a

(Continued on page 2)

A FATHER'S REFLECTIONS

(Continued, from page 1)

piece of paper on which he had written: "To my son; I give you one hour of each week and two hours of every Sunday to be used as you wish."

Laugh More With My Child

If I were to start my family again I would laugh more. That's right. I would laugh more with my child. Oscar Wilde wrote: "The best way to make children good is to make them happy." I see now that I was much too serious. While my children loved to laugh I, too often, must have conveyed the idea that being a parent was painful.

I remember when I laughed with my children — at the humorous plays they put on for the family, at the funny stories shared from school, at the times I fell for their tricks and catch questions. I recall the squeals of delight when I laughed with them and shared in their stunts on the lawn or living room floor. And I remember the times they told of these experiences with joyful expressions, years later. I know when I laughed with my children our love was enlarged and the door was open for doing many other things together.

In answer to the father who sat across the table I've jotted down these reflections. Like most important experiences in life none of these are great ideas or difficult to remember. These simple suggestions, however, can make relationships with our children more meaningful and shape the future of a child more than great things which demand a great deal of money or exceptional ingenuity. Somehow we manage enough muscle to handle the big things of life but forget that life is largely made up of little things. So a father's faithfulness in the small things of life determines to a great degree the happiness of the home.

Church Announcements

CHR. REF. CHURCH

Called

to Thunderbay, Ont., Rev. H. Vander Plaat of Kentville, N.S.

to Aylmer, Ontario, Rev. R. Leestma of Lansing, Illinois.

Accepted

to Cobourg, Ont., Rev. Al J. Vanden Pol of Georgetown, Ont.

Declined

for Charlottetown, P.E.I., Rev. Al J. Vanden Pol of Georgetown, Ont.

for Trenton, Ont., Rev. P. Van Katwyk of Kitchener, Ont.

Rev. Van Katwyk informs us that for the moment he cannot consider any calls.

—

The address of the pastor of the Kemptville, Ont. Chr. Ref. Church is Rev. J. H. Lamsma, 513 Clothier St., Kamptville, Ont.

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FREE CHR. REF. CHURCH

Called

to the Old Chr. Ref. Ch. of Grand Rapids, Mich., Rev. C. Pronk, of the Free Chr. Ref. Church of Aldergrove, B.C.

NEW CLERK OTTAWA-WEST C.R.C.

The new clerk of the Calvin Chr. Ref. Church of Ottawa-West is Mr. W. Neutel, 1226 Livingstone St., Ottawa, Ont., phone (613) 713-7141.

NEW CLERK C.R.C. NEWMARKET, ONT.

The new clerk of the Newmarket Ont. Christian Reformed Church is Mr. D. Radersma, 685 Queen St., Newmarket, Ont., phone (416) 895-2098.

NEW CLERK ORILLIA CHR. REF. CHURCH

The new clerk of the Orillia Christian Reformed Church is Mr. W. Luymes, R.R. 1, Orillia, Ont.

CHR. REF. CHURCH

Cl. Home Missions Committee Classis Eastern Ontario CRC

The new secretary of the Classical Home Missions Committee of Classis Eastern Ontario of the Christian Reformed Church is Rev. D. J. Tigchelaar, 2994 Pitt St., Cornwall, Ont.

REPORT OF FUND FOR CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION BOXES FALL 1972

BANK BALANCE	$ 24.27
July	
Aldershot	59.65
Galt	17.42
Drayton	34.45
Oct.	
Hamilton	56.30
Brantford	268.20
Mount Hamilton	240.00
Dunnville	66.80
Jarvis	260.00
Fruitland	184.45
Hamilton First	52.00
Guelph	38.50
Wellandport	262.50
St. Catharines — Trinity	246.38
St. Catharines—Maranatha	227.00
Niagara Falls	108.80
Welland Junction	36.00
Burlington	170.55
Dundas	175.00
Simcoe	— —
York	— —
INTEREST	.41
TOTAL	$2,528.68

We are happy to report to you that we were able to send $1,850.00 to Hamilton District Christian High and $618.18 to the Beacon Christian highschool in St. Catharines

We thank all the ladies who donated money and time to our schools.

Mrs. Joldersma wrote: "Your contribution of $1850 in support of Hamilton District Christian Highschool is very much appreciated. Education is expensive, and the fact that our school must meet its expenses from tuition fees, membership fees and donations, means that Christian education here depends very much on the generosity of its supporters. May the Lord continue to bless our High School, and may He cause the community of financial supporters for Christ centred learning to grow."

We have a new treasurer, who is well known to most of us. Mrs. N. Feddes, Box 15, R.R. #2 Dundas, so please send your cheque or money order to her next Spring

Betty Langendoen

On picture from left to right Ineke, Kenny 9 yrs., Billy 10 yrs., Bob, Richard 6 yrs., Mark 2 yrs.

CANADIAN MISSIONARIES RETURN TO NIGERIA

Family Lodewyk hopes to return to the mission field Jan. 1973. He has served as a teacher in a Bible School from 1966-1970 and has since been in charge of the literature program, publishing and distribution of Christian Literature in English and Nigerian languages. They spent their furlough in Red Deer, Alberta which is their calling and supporting church. CRC Rocky Mountain House is also supporting their ministry.

As they return they hope to co-ordinate Christian Literature — Bible Correspondence program and Film, Radio, Cassette in a Christian Mass Communication Centre in order to strengthen the Christians and reach out to the millions in the country. Pray for Holy Spirit guidance.

If you would like to hear about Christian literature outreach in Nigeria write to:

Mr. & Mrs. Bob Lodewyk,
Lamp and Word Books,
P.O. Box 24,
Makurdi, Nigeria, West Africa.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1972

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

An Organ Recital performed by

Peter Spoelstra, A.R.C.T.

on the recently installed Three Manual Casavant Pipe Organ in the First Christian Reformed Church of Hamilton, Charlton and Hess Streets. — 8-15 P.M. FREE ADMISSION.

The Next Issues of Calvinist-Contact

will be DATED	will be MAILED	Closing time for ADVERTISEMENTS
Mon. Dec. 18	Fri. Dec. 15 (Christmas issue)	Mon. Dec. 11
Dec. 27/Jan. 8	Fri. Jan. 5 (New Year's issue)	Tues. Jan. 2

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United States $6.50 per year; for 2 years $12.50.
Other countries $7.00 per year; for 2 years $13.50.

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Christian Chamber Orchestra "Musica" - Toronto

Christian Mixed Choir "Praise the Lord" - Toronto

Christian Mixed Choir "Praise the Lord" - Bowmanville

Christian Children's Choir "The Lord is my Shepherd" - Toronto

all under the direction of

Leendert Kooy, A.R.C.T.

PLACES:

BOWMANVILLE: Saturday, December 16, at 8:00 p.m. in the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church, Scugog Street, Bowmanville.

TORONTO: Tuesday, December 26, at 8:00 p.m. in the Knox Presbyterian Church, 630 Spadina Ave., Toronto 4 (at Harbord, two blocks south of Bloor Street).

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

At the end of this year a trial law in Canada expires, by which capital punishment is abolished, except in cases where prison guards or police officers are killed.

A few days ago there appeared a long article in the Hamilton "Spectator", in which another consideration is submitted, which is almost universally forgotten. Always the murderer receives the full attention. Why did he kill? But it is never asked what the victim would have said should he have had the opportunity to give his judgement about the murderer. All the attention is fixed on the plight of the man on trial, never on the rights of the victim.

One may argue that this plea for the victim is hypothetical, since there is never an opportunity to hear him. True as this may be, it is often, if not always, forgotten that the victim had a right as a human being, a God - given right, and this right should also be protected by the government.

Nevertheless, the argument of the writer of the article in the "Spectator" does not solve the problem. The question is whether the government may execute capital punishment, or not.

There are those who believe that Genesis 9:6 is a ground for capital punishment, but there are others who deny it. In this text God indeed says that whoever sheds a man's blood, by man his blood be shed. However, it seems that the subject of this passage of Scripture is not justice, but rather protection and multiplication of mankind. The one does not exclude the other, but there is a distinction. The passage reads:

> *"You shall not eat flesh with its blood. For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image. And you be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it." (Genesis 9:5 - 7)*

When a number of years ago the Canadian Christian Reformed Church urged the government to maintain the death penalty, the plea was mainly based on Genesis 9:6. However, there are numerous Christians, also in the Christian Reformed denomination, who have great difficulty with the interpretation of this text.

There are other Scripture passages which seem to contradict the death penalty. For instance Ezekiel 18:23 which says: "Have I pleasure in the death of the wicked, says the LORD God, and not rather that the sinner should turn from his wicked way and live?"

The death penalty should be put into the right perspective. It should not be argued that the death penalty is deterrent, or that there is a possibility of a judicial error or that we should give the murderer the possibility of rehabilitation. These arguments can all be true, but the basis of the death penalty is whether the government, which in applying it, serves as God's servant. Does the justice of the Lord require that a man, who kills someone else, be put to death? Yes? say some and they point to Genesis T:T. No, say others and they point to Ezekiel 18:23

Life belongs to the Lord, whether it be the life of a murderer or the life of his victim. If a murderer takes the life of his victim, may the government punish this murderer by taking his life? If this government is fully aware of its office as executor of the justice of the Lord, and if the government is absolutely sure that the man on trial is indeed the murderer, we are inclined to say yes. Not on the basis of any humane considerations, but only on the basis of the execution of the justice of God. However, if anyone finds a basis in the Bible for an opposite point of view, let him or her say so.

D.F.

CALVINIST - CONTACT

CHRISTIAN WEEKLY

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JENNIFER

"Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child . . ."

•

Johnny and Jennifer were on their way to school.

They lived on the same street but the school stood at the other end of their small town.

It had started to snow that morning.

"Do you believe in Santa Claus?" Jennifer asked as she hopped and skipped along.

"I guess. Do you?"

"No, but I like him though."

"Silly, how can you like somebody if you think he doesn't even exist?" Johnny answered in surprise and with a bit of irritation. To himself he thought: "Girls!"

But Jennifer told him happily: "Well, it's mostly the presents that I like, you see, and all the lights and the music and, of course, the Parade!"

Johnny could see her point but he still didn't understand why she shouldn't believe in Santa Claus.

He thought about it for a while and then he asked:

"Do you believe in God and in the Baby Jesus?"

"Oh yes! Do you?"

"Nope. But I do like Christmas."

"See?" Jennifer stood still, but Johnny walked on.

She caught up with him again, "now you talk the same as I did."

Johnny chose to remain quiet. They were only about half-way to school yet.

Jennifer didn't say anything anymore either. She was thinking.

She did that more often — when she was sitting on her swing for example, or when she looked at the sky from her bedroom window.

"Suppose," she thought, "suppose there wouldn't be anybody or anything. No world, no people, no moon or sun or stars, no trees, no God even."

It gave her an eerie feeling to think like that. Then she wouldn't exist either.

Imagine. No, that was something she couldn't imagine.

She looked at Johnny. She wanted him to feel what she was feeling but how could she make him?

She didn't know but she tried it anyway:

"Say, Johnny, you know what I sometimes think? It wouldn't make much difference if there were no Santa Claus, we would have Christmas anyway. But suppose God wasn't really God, then there would be nothing."

"Not even you," she added because she wanted him to understand what she was trying to say.

Johnny shrugged his shoulders impatiently. He was not in the mood for thinking like that.

Therefore he answered curtly: "We'd better hurry, I think we're late. I saw the second schoolbus turn into Mill Street already."

Jennifer felt rather sad. If only he would listen. She would so very much like to make him think about God.

She thought of all the stories from the children's Bible which she would like to tell him. What would he say if she told him about Elijah the Prophet, who went straight to heaven in a whirlwind? He was sitting in a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire. She often tried to picture it before her eyes. It must have been beautiful. She could think of many more stories and the best part was even that they were true, really and absolutely true. Her own Mother had told her so. In fact, these beautiful, exciting and sometimes sad stories had to happen during the time of the Old Testament. They all had been leading up to that Holy night in which the Lord Jesus had been born.

She looked at Johnny again. He wouldn't believe it, she thought, sadly. Just as she didn't want to believe that Santa Claus came riding through the sky on his sleigh, all the way from the North Pole.

They came to school. Santa Claus was coming to visit that day. In a corner of the big hall was a stable with Mary and Joseph and the Baby Jesus in his crib. The grade eight boys had made it in Industrial Arts class. Today though, hardly anybody paid attention to it, they were all so excited about Santa Claus.

But Jennifer went over and stroked the Baby.

"I love You," she whispered.

(Mrs.) Alice Los.

DEVILISH ACTION

A booklet has gained popularity in a short time. "Called to Serve", the study booklet of the "Evangelism Thrust" program, which was published originally by the Christian Reformed Church, has found its way far beyond this denomination.

The booklet is both highly praised and it is criticized, but in our opinion it is very suitable for the preparation of the "thrust" which the church should make in order to come into the open.

It was a good idea to include some "Screwtape letters" in this booklet, borrowed from a book under the same title by C. S. Lewis. We should constantly be aware of the fact that greater activity of the church generates greater activity of the devil as well. However, we should also be on our guard that the devil will act very cunningly. He will be careful enough not to collide with the church head on. But he will stimulate the thought that people do not take him seriously or even deny his very existence. He will not try to stop the discussions in the "Evangelism Thrust" groups, but he will try to keep the discussions theoretical, and he will take care that the different opinions are very pronounced and that people keep on talking about them.

We have to be aware of these tactics. In the booklet "Called to Serve" much room is given for a discussion of the church. The purpose is, of course, that we should be conscious of what the church really is. But the danger is very real that some people will seize the opportunity to vent their dissatisfaction with the local church or with the minister or with the consistory or council.

In the course of the study of "Called to Serve" the danger of slipping will increase. Pretty soon the various goals have to be set. We can have lengthy discussions about these goals, we can meet difficulties, because several may have the same goals but want to go different ways to attain them. This is exactly what Satan wants. He wants us to keep talking, because as long as we talk, we don't act. This is precisely his purpose.

The devil is never interested in anyone, whoever he or she is. The devil's aim is to hurt God and if he can use us for that purpose, he will use us, whoever we are. If God's church makes itself ready to be indeed God's church, then the devil will use his most intelligent and cunning methods to block this.

Concentration on evangelism is good, and we are glad that the booklet "Called to Serve" has gained so much popularity. But we also need much prayer for protection. Prayer for each other and prayer for ourselves, so that the devil will not distantiate us from God's aim.

* *Originally this editorial was published in Dutch in the Nov. 27 issue of Calvinist-Contact. Upon request we publish it here in the English language.*

D.F.

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The Reformed Bible Institute is the little league school for big league Christians. Here we train missionaries, lay evangelists, pastors' assistants. We make finders out of seekers. Then our thoroughly committed graduates move out to the front lines of the Kingdom, eager to get into action...for Christ's sake. If you're looking for a Bible college where dedicated Christians are molded into vibrant, effective witnesses ...there's one readily available to you. Come join us!

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STRANGE DICTATORSHIP

All young people who have attended high school and have had a course in history know that 1789 is a turning point in the French history. A new chapter started then, namely the "New History".

Before 1789 the reign of King Louis XVI was absolute; so continues the story. There was no sign of influence by the people. It was more than one and a half centuries ago since parliament had been called together for the last time.

De Tocqueville wrote more than a century before that those who speak this way make a serious mistake. There was someone with power who directed even the king in his palace.

Necker had stated, twenty years before the revolution s.arted, that parliament had resigned and went along with what the public opinion wanted from day to day. Nobody seemed to realize that the public opinion is different from what the people are actually thinking.

No one seemed to see that this public opinion was being created artificially. Public opinion ruled. If in those days there had been political conferences, some individual might have confessed openly: "at first I thought this way but now that I notice the impression the issue has made on the public opinion, I have changed my mind and am going over to — — —".

"The old regime in France died after and because it had resigned". This is one of the strongest statements in de Tocqueville's argument. A parliament which doesn't hold the reigns tightly is surely going to lose. Also today.

"Friesch Dagblad"

•

HYPOCRISY

At the start of the Olympic Games something had to be impressed on the spectators and the whole world. This is of so much importance that it has to be done under oath. We are told that all competitors are amateurs. They don't make a profession of the sport. However, everybody knows this to be a big lie.

For instance competitors from communist countries make sport their main occupation because, although they are listed as officers in the army and receive a salary accordingly, they practice their sport rigorously upon orders from their superiors.

People know this, but they still act as if only amateurs perform. No country seems to protest against this hypocrisy, neither does any country threaten to withdraw if this hypocrisy is not stopped!

"Friesch Dagblad"

Constipated?

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Pastoral Counselling

"SHARING THE JOY OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON"

REV. RALPH HEYNEN

PINE REST CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

I'd like to discuss with you today "Sharing the Joy of the Holiday Season". Dr. Will Meninger in one of his writings presents a portrait of a mature person. The first quality of maturity that he lists is that a person finds greater satisfaction in giving than in receiving. To me there is something significant in that statement, because we know that there are a lot of people who give gifts because they know that they are also going to receive them. I know of some people who send out Christmas cards, and each year they check off which of their friends or of their acquaintances or relatives did not send them a card and then next year they scratch them off the list, because they are not going to send a card if the other person doesn't do it. We know, too, that there are many people who give things because they know that they are going to receive something. And somehow or other you have to figure out then that you give something which is of comparable value or which has somewhat the same meaning for the other person that it has for you. To me this is a basic selfishness. These are gifts that have strings attached to them. It's not really giving. There's no real sense of enjoyment in that kind of giving, because a selfish person is usually unhappy. The prevailing mood of his life is gloomy, for there's no satisfaction when you have that kind of stranglehold on your life, because the focus of your life is centered upon yourself and not on others. It isn't real giving. Jesus talks about the people who invite others to their homes because they know they can invite them back again; but he suggests that to have a really good banquet, you should invite those who don't have the means to invite you again. We are in danger of giving bartered benevolences. We give something in order to get something, and when we don't get just what we would like in return, we often don't feel too good.

It does become evident that at this season of the year, this holiday season, there's a lot of unhappiness and depression. Many people suffer from depressions around Christmas time and around New Years, because this should really be for them a time of joy, and actually, it isn't. They feel sad and gloomy, and it seems to me that the gloom of this year is possibly greater than the joy that people find. Christmas carols can often have an extremely empty ring. The chimes that ring on New Year's night can seem awfully empty and barren if we don't really enter into the spirit of it. Now to my mind, the basic selfishness of people must be broken. Giving gifts with strings attached to them is not really giving. We have lying before us in the world in which we live such a vast opportunity; so very many people who need us and who need help and yet we don't give it to them. I find that at this time of the year there are many lonely people. I had a letter from a mother who lives alone, and she complained that this year none of her children would be able to come. Two were expecting babies so they could not conveniently travel; the third one planned to take his family to Florida over the holiday vacation, and so she was going to be alone on Christmas Day or New Year's Eve. Oh, I know, when you write to a person like that you tell them you don't have to be lonely, find somebody else who is lonely and enjoy each other's company, but there are lonely hearts. Then there are those who are lonely even in a crowd. There are many families who are torn assunder by strife. These battles seem to become a bit worse at the holidays when the whole family seems to get together; but there is one son who happened to marry a girl that the family hasn't accepted and so they are not invited. I'm not sure who will be the most lonely, the ones who are present or the ones who are absent, because the family must not feel very good about it when one important member of the family isn't there. I have also run into a number of people lately whose divorces will become final the week before Christmas or some in the first week of the new year. Now there's always something nasty about this business. Somebody always gets hurt in these divorces. If it isn't one of the parents it surely will be the children, and when this strikes at that particular time of the year, it's little wonder that there is gloom instead of happiness, that there is weeping instead of laughter.

A number of people have not been able to get work or have not been able to get the kind of work that they need. For some there will be no presents that they can give to their children. Their paycheck has been stretched to the extreme; they can only take care of the necessities of life and they don't have anything for the little luxuries of life, and the little gifts that can be given at this particular season of the year; and there is a sense of gloom about it all. There are a number of people in hospitals; there are those in pain and in distress; there are those that sorrow. Where then is the real joy of the holiday season? To many people when you talk about Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, it has an awful hollow ring. It doesn't mean that to them. To my mind the real joy of this season of the year lies in the inner attitude of the heart. If we spend this time in a selfish way, thinking in terms of me and my own family and our own little circle, shutting out those whom we don't particularly care to see at that time of the year, we've lost somewhat of the spirit of this season of the year. This should be a time of giving, but a gift that is given without the giver is still very bare; it's not very important.

Then I think also there is the need to share with others and to share unselfishly. We know that today there are many people who are in distress and in want; hunger is common in many homes even in our country. We see a great deal of difficulties that face families and homes. We see the distress that there is in the lives of even little children. Can we then just pass by on the other side and say, "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" and do nothing about it? Even though we cannot give a great deal, we can share of ourself. We can show in one way or another that we do care. This, to my mind, is one of the ingredients that makes this season of the year joyful. There's a lot of depression in the hearts of people at the holiday season. We can talk about it, we can say that we regret it, but I believe we should do something about it. The idea of sharing of that which we have or sharing of ourselves with others, is one way in which we can bring about a greater sense of satisfaction for ourselves, a greater sense of joy within our hearts and a greater sense of happiness to others. Make this a happy holiday season, not just for yourself, but also for others.

I like to stress this thought a little bit at this time of the year because usually at this time of the year we get quite a number of gifts from people in response to our campaign for the Childrens Retreat. We're asking others to help us in order that we can care for these children. In the last year the gifts have not been coming in quite as well as in previous years, but we would like to encourage you to include these little ones also in your giving and in your sharing. Then there are many other causes that need our help and that need our concern, and that need our prayers. Make this a blessed Christmas, also in that way.

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OUR THOUGHT FOR TODAY: look at life as it really is, and then look up to God who controls all of life and sends to each man the thing that He knows will be useful for the building of his character and the strengthening of his faith. For then we need not wonder what God is trying to do, but we will know that all things do work together for good.

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Professor Discovers 22% of Students Believe in Witches, Occultism

Madison, Wisc. (EP) — As early as the next generation, most young people could believe in spirit messages from beyond the grave, spell-casting witches, and astrology.

So states Prof. David C. Lindberg of the University of Wisconson. He and Prof. Robert Seigfriend, both of the university's history of science department, have been jointly teaching a popular course in the "History of the Occult and Pseudo-Science."

The men discovered that among 231 juniors and seniors 74 per cent believed in extrasensory perception, 20 per cent were uncertain about it and only six per cent denied its existence.

The professors also learned that 20 per cent of the juniors and seniors believed in the future-foretelling ability of palm readers, 23 per cent in witches and 18 per cent in astrology.

Lindberg admitted the findings "boggled my mind at first." He said the credence given to astrology and palmistry was particularly upsetting because "there's absolutely no factual evidence to support them. It's easy to slide from the feeling that something is possible to a belief that it's true," he said. "We hope to show students that the senses cannot be trusted — the capacity for self-deception is nearly infinite."

BILLY GRAHAM PREDICTS NIXON MORAL EMPHASIS

Waikiki Beach, Honolulu (EP) — During his second term in office, President Nixon will "be putting a lot more emphasis on moral and spiritual affairs," Evangelist Billy Graham said here enroute to a crusade in Nagaland, northern India.

The evangelist, a frequent White House visitor who announced his support of the President early in the 1972 race, said the President "realized that the greatest problem we're facing is moral permisiveness and decadence."

Dr. Graham predicts the "long nightmare of Vietnam" will end soon. I wouldn't be at all surprised if the POWs are home by Christmas and American involvement in Vietnam will end by the first of the year," Graham said. He added that he is not "privy to any inside information." He predicted that Americans would see a great many changes in the next four years, "especially in the field of foreign and domestic affairs."

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FROM THE DESK OF REV. J. D. TANGELDER

A cartoon sums up well one aspect of our modern mind. A bearded and unhappy prophet of doom is pictured walking the sidewalk with a picket sign bearing this grim message: "We're doomed! The world will NOT end!" The humour of this cartoon lies in the fact that the end of the world is no longer a frightening fact, whereas the continuation of the present world - order is. A rather uncomfortable thought? Of course! No era lacks its fears and its problems. There has never been a time without frustration and trouble. Every generation has produced its prophets warning about the dread of their age. But when the fear of the age outweighs its hopes, then we are in trouble. In 1954, Bernard Baruch found modern mentality increasingly showing a deep concern for the future. "Everywhere we look we find further evidences of this dread breakdown."

We see lack of stability everywhere. Nervous problems are the order of the day. Authority is being questioned. So many want to do their own thing. Without knowing what actually their own thing is. People are on the run. They are on the move. They don't want to stay where they are. Every little inkling pointing to hope is eagerly grasped. President Nixon's trip to China and his chopstick policy are supposed to be the latest signposts of hope.

What are the expectations for the future? Humanly speaking, there is no hope. Courage has lost its ability to tackle its problems; and it has developed an appetite for the most tasteless types of amusements. Mankind has now the ability to make the greatest fireworks in history. It has the power to destroy itself. But thank God that the Christian can express his faith in the coming of the new heaven and earth. At the end of history stands Jesus Christ. And my Christian readers say: "Yes! It is true. This is our hope." But I dare say that the hope of Christ's return is all but dead among evangelical Christians. Truth touching the second coming is either a dead issue of a nice debate over a cup of coffee after church, even threatening church unity as evangelicals have the habit of Biblical hair splitting. The joyful personal element of Christ's return is missing. The bride (the church) is not very eagerly awaiting the bridegroom (Jesus Christ). If the yearning for the advent hope is gone, there must be reasons for it. Let me suggest a few. Many Christians are so comfortable in this world that they have little desire to leave it. Their faith in the hope offered in Christ is more of an insurance for a pleasant future. But why exchange a familiar good for something we know so very little about? And in our society the challenge of Christianity has been replaced by softness. In these times religion has become a comfortable pew. They look for a new world to come? Christ has carried the cross and shed His tears; we have to enjoy the benefits of His suffering in the form of religious pleasure.

History tells us the times of suffering for the church have been the times of looking upward. Hard times have encouraged God's people to look with longing for the return of the Lord. Someone said: "God will wean us from the earth some way — the easy way if possible, the hard way if necessary. It is up to us."

Christ is coming again! Let the church stay awake and long for His coming!

Pueblo Officer Says Bible Aided in Survival of Ordeal

New Haven, Conn. (EP) — A deep belief in God helped the ship's 82 crewmen survive their 11-month imprisonment in North Korea five years ago, the USS Pueblo's chief intelligence officer said in an intreview here.

"Among our crew, God was very much alive," Commander Stephen R. Harris said. Harris, now with the Navy Department in the capital, said on the day the Pueblo's crew was seized Jan. 23, 1968, his Bible was taken away from him "at the point of a bayonet."

The prisoners decided to make a Bible "which was less than 100 per cent successful." Snatches of hymns, elements of worship services, precious bits of Scripture were written on left-over scraps of paper. This unorthodox, but living, vital document, became known as the "Pueblo Bible."

"In our unchurched, unlearned way we turned to God as prayer groups and secret biblical discussions sprang up among those not in solitary confinement," he said.

Harris said when the Pueblo Bible was discovered he received a "new set of bruises."

GUIDE

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Book Review

FOR GOD'S SAKE RUN WITH JOY, by Calvin Seerveld, paintings by Henk Krijger. Wedge Publishing Foundatino; 207 pages, n.p.

Reviewed by Cor W. Barendrecht.

Dr. Calvin Seerveld has a style of his own, which is frequenlty imitated or copied by some of his students. This book, which consists of chapel talks at Trinity Christian College (where Dr. Seerveld formerly taught), covers a period of a number of years. The talks allow the reader to look over the shoulder of the Trinity student and to see what that student may have heard. The author shakes the wraths and the judgments easily, but he also puts his finger on some sore spots. As a prophet of doom he is more successful than as one who brings good news.

The translations of scripture are slightly strained and interpretive and do not match up to earlier work by the same author. But in spite of these shortcomings, the book must mean something to the students who have heard these messages and have seen the facial expressions, the theatrics and the delivery of these meditations firsthand. They are interspersed with the author's opinions, which, given the setting of a college chapel, add flavor to the meditations, as they transpose situations of the ancient Hebrews into contemporary ones.

Henk Krijger is an excellent artist who appears to draw heavily in Picasso and has a fine sense of composition and contrast, but which does not come to expression in what appears to be a charcoal drawing, entitled, "After the Fall".

I feel that this book has too much local appeal and too little universal appeal, but I may be wrong. Perhaps these meditations will help someone in getting some new insights.

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JIMMIE MOORE OF BUCKTOWN, by Mel Trotter. Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications: 1970. (First edition: 1904; Reprint edition: 1970); 231 pages, $1.50.

Reviewed by Cor W. Barendrecht.

"Mel Trottre wrote the story of those early years of the Mission in Grand Rapids as only . . . Trotter could write it," says Rev. George Bontekoe, presently superintendent of the Mel Trotter Mission, in the preface.

The Mel Trotter Mission started to direct its activities against the drinkers, the cheats, the whoregoers, and the prostitutes at the turn of twentieth century Grand Rapids. It seems good to read that in this city — which for a long time has been referred to as a "Christian Reformed Zion", and to many is known only by that name — individuals like Trotter did not wait for a Reformed denomination to wake up to the challenge of confronting saloonkeepers, drunks, and girls of loose morals with the gospel of salvation.

The story of Jimmie Moore is the story of "Bucktown", the area of the city market, which was razed to make room for a railroad. It shows how the gospel affects the lives of people who come to Jesus for salvation. No, it isn't a Reformed kind of mission, and one gets the impression that the Mission itself is like a surgeon's theater to which a sinner must come in order to be saved. The gospel is simple, and slightly moralistic, but perhaps necessary for the situation. The mesage lacks depth, the story lack organization, jumping from one situation to another without any transition, but yet: this book shows the power of God to transform lives, and as such it deserves a reading.

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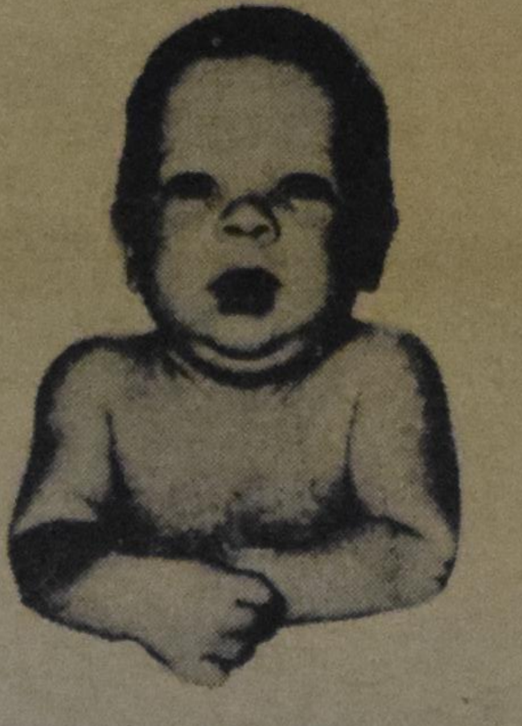

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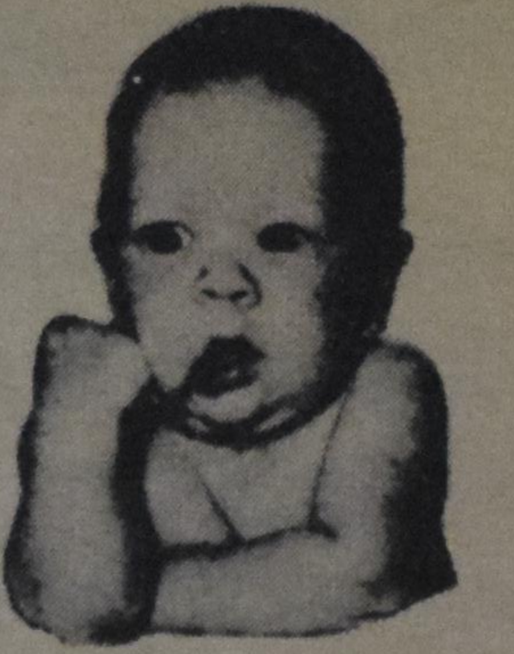

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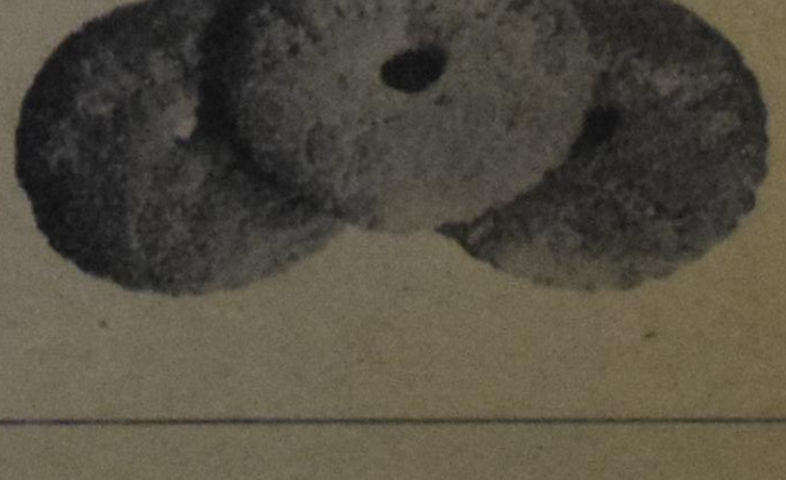

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ZO BEGON KERST

"En het geschiedde in die dagen dat er een gebod uitging van de keizer Augustus. . ."

Het Kerst - evangelie hebben wij zoo vaak gehoord, dat iedereen weet, dat deze woorden te vinden zijn in Lukas 2. Maar de betekenis van die woorden is moeilijk te omschrijven. Augustus had zijn oorlogen achter de rug en wilde nu wel eens weten hoe groot zijn rijk was en hoe groot het aantal inwoners.

Er was toen nog geen "Christendom". Er was alleen dat Joodse volk met zijn godsdienst. Maar onder keizer Augustus waren vele volken met hun godsdiensten. Men kon toch moeilijk verwachten, dat iemand als keizer Augustus daaraan aandacht zou geven. Zijn gedachten hielden zich bezig met zijn rijk. Daarom volkstelling.

De grote keizer heeft echter niet geweten, dat hij bezig was de raad van God uit te voeren. Dat weet de wereld nog steeds niet. De wereld is druk bezig met vele dingen. De wereld is zich ook bewust dat er verschillende godsdiensten zijn, maar daaraan geeft zij geen aandacht. Maar de wereld weet niet, dat ze bezig is de raad van God uit te voeren.

Gedurende die volkstelling had niet alleen de Romeinse regering geen aandacht voor religieuze zaken, maar ook de gewone mensen hadden die niet. Het was geen klein ding om naar "je eigen stad" te gaan. De eigen stad van Jozef en Maria was niet Nazareth, maar Bethlehem. Nu hadden Jozef en Maria wel veel gemerkt van het doen van God, maar tijd om daar nu eens goed over door te denken, was er haast niet. Want de keizer had gesproken en dus moesten zij op reis.

Aanvankelijk had Jozef plannen gehad om Maria te verlaten, maar door de boodschap van de engel had hij die plannen laten varen. Hij was deelgenoot gemaakt van het geheim van Maria. Maar voor hem en ook voor Maria was het nog steeds een geheim.

Onderschat het niet. Zij hebben elkaar misschien wel vaak aangekeken, maar zij hebben misschien elkaars blikken ook wel gemeden. Zij waren niet getrouwd! En toch was Maria in verwachting. Wat zouden de mensen wel zeggen? Hoe zou alles toch gaan? Niet alleen: hoe zou de boodschap van de engel werkelijkheid worden, maar tevens: hoe zouden zij worden aangezien door de mensen, hoe zouden zij hun figuur kunnen redden?

En zo zijn zij op stap gegaan. Op Augustus' bevel. Zij hebben het waarschijnlijk niet kunnen omschrijven, maar zij hebben de tegenstelling wel beleefd, niet alleen in de wereld rondom hen, maar zij hebben de tegenstelling ook beleefd in eigen hart. Aan de ene kant de rijkdom van de belofte van de engel, aan de andere kant de knagende gedachte over wat de mensen wel van hun verhouding moesten zeggen. Je geheel overgeven aan Gods plan, vertrouwen dat je medearbeider van God mag zijn — wij durven niet te zeggen dat Jozef en Maria het niet gekund hebben, maar het is moeilijk. Eén te zijn met God ook als alle omstandigheden tegenwerken.

En toch: zo begon Kerst.

D.F.

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Om de afstand tussen U en uw geliefden en vrienden te verkleinen en hen met de "Holidays" naderbij te brengen, stuur hen een bloemengroet via Interflora, het wereldwijde Floral verzendingsnetwerk. Interflora heeft 40,000 bloemisten in 130 landen, die uw Seizoensgroeten willen overbrengen in de vorm van prachtige verse bloemen, praktisch over de gehele wereld.

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VAN DOMINEES EN GEMEENTEN

door JOHN DE HAAS

(29)

De Dertiger Jaren (continued)

En zo brak het jaar 1933 aan en kwam de Synode te Middelburg samen. Behalve dat zij een Gezangenbundel aanvaardde, had zij nog meer te doen. Er moesten twee hoogleraren aan de Theologische School te Kampen worden benoemd. De twee oudste professoren, Dr. A. G. Honig en Dr. H. Bouwman hadden beiden emeritaat aangevraagd. Beiden waren zeer bekwame mannen, en hadden de School met hun beste krachten gediend.

In dat donkere jaar 1902 waren zij benoemd en hadden de zware taak op zich genomen om het hoogleeraarschap uit te oefenen aan de zo zeer gehavende School. Het aantal professoren werd teruggebracht van vijf op vier, het getal studenten, dat in 1902 nog op 28 stond (vergelijk dat met over de 50 vóór 1902) zakte gaandeweg tot 17 in 1905! Toen was het dieptepunt echter bereikt, en vanaf dat jaar is het weer in stijgende lijn gegaan.

Maar deze beide mannen hebben het aangedurfd de benoeming te aanvaarden en zij hebben de School met ere gediend. Beiden hadden echter bijna de 70-jarige leeftijd bereikt, en zo moest de Syndoe omzien naar hun opvolgers.

Met algemene stemmen werden in dit ambt benoemd Dr. M. Gerrit Marinus den Hartogh, predikant te Hazerswoude, en Dr. Klaas Schilder, te Rotterdam-Delfshaven.

De eerste had, hoewel predikantszoon zijnde, rechten gestudeerd aan de V.U., had daar de titel van "Mr." gehaald en was enige jaren verbonden geweest aan de Kuyperstichting te Den Haag. Doch zijn hart ging toch uit naar de theologie, en zo had hij zich opnieuw laten inschrijven als student, nu in de theologische faculteit, en was in 1929 predikant geworden. Zijn studien maakten hem bij uitstek geschikt om als opvolger van Prof. Bouwman de katheder te bezetten van kerkgeschiedenis en kerkrecht. Zijn zwak lichaam heeft hem echter belet om zulk een werkkracht te ontwikkelen, die hij gaarne zou hebben getoond.

Hij was bijna negen jaar de jongere van zijn collega Schilder, die aangewezen werd om dogmatiek te doceren. Deze werd hiermede de vijfde hoogleraar in dit vak aan de Kamper School, na De Haan, De Cock, Bavinck, en Honig.

Hij was in Kampen geboren. Toen hij zes jaar oud was, verloor hij zijn vader, en bleef zijn moeder met vier jonge kinderen achter. Hij groeide daardoor op in zeer moeilijke financiele omstandigheden, en kwam als loopjongen in een manufacturenhandel. Maar daar bracht hij niets van terecht, hij was totaal ongeschikt voor de handel. Zijn hoofdonderwijzer, meester De Waal, zag echter iets in hem en sprak met Dr. A. Noordtzij, leraar aan het gymnasium en rector aan de Theologische School.

En zo kwam Klaasje op het gymnasium. In het begin stond hij vreemd tegenover de nieuwe wereld, waarin hij intrede deed. Maar dat duurde niet zo lang. Het was alsof zijn geest ontwaakte en intensief heeft hij aan het gymnasten- en daarna aan het studentenleven aan de School deelgenomen. In 1914 predikant geworden, diende hij de Gereformeerde Kerken van Ambt-Vollenhove, Vlaardingen, Gorinchem, Delft, Oegstgeest en vanaf Juni 1928 Rotterdam-Delfshaven.

Van het eerste begin van zijn optreden af bleken zijn grote gaven. En het waren heus niet alleen de Gereformeerden, die werden gegrepen door zijn prediking. De bekende Dr. J. H. Gunning, die eens een radiopreek van Schilder had gehoord, schreef daarvan in zijn blad "Pniel": "Dat noem ik preeken! Niets geen bijzondere welsprekendheid. Zelfs een hier en daar onduidelijke stem. Geen vloeiende, bruisende oratorie. Maar in langen tijd werd ik toch niet zó gegrepen als nu door de majesteit der waarheid, de verhevenheid van Gods gedachten, de heerlijheid van mijn Zaligmaker".

Al spoedig nadat Schilder begon te preken, is hij ook gaan schrijven: in kerkbodes en andere kerkelijke bladen. Ook dáárvoor had hij grote gaven ontvangen. Bovendien: hij voelde zich daartoe geroepen. Scherp zag hij om zich heen en alles wat hem belangwekkend toescheen, werd door hem besproken. En als hij dan zijn mening had gezegd en het licht van Gods Woord had laten schijnen over zijn onderwerp, dan kwamen er anderen, die hem bestreden. Uit de Gerfeormeerde Kerken, doch ook van "buiten". En dan kwam er polemiek! Dan scheen het wel, alsof Schilder er behagen in schiep, om te polemiseren met ieder, die het niet met hem eens was. Alsof die polemiek het doel was!

Wat men echter van Schilder in zijn periode als predikant kan zeggen, zeker niet dat hij een onzeker geluid deed horen! Hij heeft vaak gestreden, en soms zéér fel. Maar altijd eerlijk en zonder bijbedoelingen. Dit zal ieder moeten toestemmen, die hem in zijn strijd heeft gadegeslagen. Zo schreef Ds. A. Ringnalda, predikant te Soerabaja, die toch waarlijk geen "Schilderiaan" was, in het "Kerkblad van de Geref. Kerken in Ned. Indie" eens over hem. Deze predikant wees er op, dat op de vraag, hoe Christusbelijders, die kerkelijk gescheiden leven, bij elkander moeten komen, vroeger werd geantwoord: "Breng naar voren, wat samenbindt". Doch dat hierin verandering aan het komen was. "Wij hebben dit al lang en scherp opgemerkt", zo schreef hij, "in de polemiek, die Ds. Schilder voert in verschillende bladen, met name met hen, die van Gereformeerde belijdenis zijn. Deze vruchtbare schrijver camoufleert niets, maar brengt integendeel alle mogelijke verschilpunten in het licht; ja ook datgene wat anderen min of meer in nevelen houden, trekt hij in het licht. Onvermoeid is hij in zijn polemiek, die soms, naar het schijnt, futiliteiten betreft. Maar hij vervolgt ze; ontleedt ze; wijst er het achterliggende beginsel van aan; en toont duidelijk aan wat ons scheidt van anderen. Deze wijze van polemiseeren is uiterst vermoeiend en dikwijls heel vervelend; en men voelt telkens de neiging in zich opkomen te zeggen: houd toch op; laat het toch loopen; rafel alles niet zo uit; op deze wijze wordt de scheiding hoe langer hoe dieper! Maar dan antwoordt Ds. Schilder u direct; vermoeiend is het; en voor mijn plezier doe ik het ook niet; maar dit is de eenige weg, waarlangs we tot waarachtige eenheid kunnen komen. Zijn doel is waarlijk niet de polemiek zelf; maar veeleer de bevordering van de zoo gewenschte eenheid, maar dan geen schijneenheid, die toch weer teleurstelling baren gaat; doch echte en duurzame eenheid. De weg is lang en oneffen; moeilijk en verdrietig; maar . . . is er wel een andere weg?"

In het voorjaar van 1930 ging een lang gekoesterde wens van Schilder in vervulling. Hij werd toen door zijn kerkeraad in staat gesteld gedurend twee jaar te gaan studeren aan de Universiteit te Erlangen (Duitsland), om daar de doctorstitel in de Philosofie te behalen. Hij heeft daar hard gewerkt en de tijd daar doorgebracht en de kennis daar vergaard, zijn hem later enorm van pas gekomen, toen hij tot hoogleraar werd geroepen.

Prof. Herrigel was zijn promotor, een man van wereldwijde vermaardheid. Deze liet Schilder volkomen vrij bij de bewerking van diens dissertatie. Zonder dat ooit één zin gewijzigd behoefde te worden, werd ze geaccepteerd. En wat sedert jaren in Erlangen niet was geschied, overkwam Schilder: hij promoveerde summa cum laude: met de hoogste lof! De promotor verklaarde zelfs, dat hij niet geloofde ooit weer zulk een dissertatie te zullen ontvangen. En toen Schilder weer was vertrokken, schreef hij aan een van zijn vrienden, dat hij in Schilder zijn beste en rijpste leerling had verloren.

Behalve dat de tijd in Erlangen doorgebracht aan Schilder, en later ook de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland zulk een geweldige wetenschappelijke winst had opgeleverd, gaf hij hem nog meer: veel en velerlei ervaring. Want ook in Erlangen zag hij om zich heen. Daar was ook de Kerk van Jezus Christus. En Schilder heeft ook daar veel schoons beleefd. Zijn naar eenheid hunkerend hart zocht contacten waar het maar mogelijk was. De kerk verzuimde hij nooit. Hij vierde daar ook Avondmaal. In de Lutherse Kerk nam hij brood en wijn geknield in ontvangst. Maar wat hem blijvend greep en ontroerde, dat was de subtiele en grove verwereldlijking, welke alles in de kerk aantastte en krachteloos maakte; dat was het fatale handhaven van de gemeenschap met allen, die ongeacht hun geloof tot de kerk wilden behoren; dat was de weigering om als kerk werkelijk te staan met en vóór het Woord Gods. De ontzettende gevolgen hiervan heeft hij gezien en nimmer vergeten. Er zijn hier veel mooie lui, schreef hij eens. "Ik zie elken Zondag den ouden Zahn (92 jaar) in de kerk. Ik zie hem bidden, zingen, de 12 art. opzeggen en ik voel de wijde kracht van het christelijk geloof". Zo heeft Schilder de kerk gezien en beleefd. Maar was moest van de toekomst worden verwacht, wanneer het in de slecht bezette kerken niet is te merken of honderden theologische studenten in de stad of met vacantie zijn?

Er zo kwam Schilder in Maart 1933 in Nederland terug, gereed om zijn herderlijk werk in zijn gemeente voort te zetten, doch ook om het professoraat op zich te nemen. Hem wachtte een zware taak. Doch ook een zware strijd. Op alle fronten!

Garlic is goed voor U

Garlic is een natuurlijk antiseptisch geneesmiddel hetwelk de bloedsomloop vrijhoudt van onzuiverheden en voorkomt of vernietigt ontbindings-bacillen.

Adams Garlic Pearles bevat de essentiële Garlic olie, die voor vele jaren medisch is gebruikt. Gedurende eeuwen hebben miljoenen mensen Garlic gebruikt als een gezondheidsmiddel, vertrouwend in de genezende en versterkende werking. Help uzelf sterk en gezond te voelen. Koop een pakje Adams Garlic Pearles vandaag bij uw drogist. Het kan u beter doen voelen, gezonder en met minder verkoudheden. Zij zijn reuk- en smaakloos in capsule vorm.

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MEDEDELING VAN HET CONSULAAT-GENERAAL DER NEDERLANDEN

Nederlanders, die geen andere nationaliteit hebben verkregen en die **buiten** Nederland, Suriname, de Nederlandse Antillen of Indonesië zijn geboren, dienen er attent op te zijn dat zij, indien zij gedurende **10 jaren achtereen in het buitenland woonachtig zijn, hun Nederlandse nationaliteit kunnen verliezen.**

Om dit te voorkomen moeten zij vóór het verstrijken van deze tienjarige termijn aan een diplomatieke of consulaire post kennisgeven van hun wens Nederlander te blijven.

Genoemde tienjarige termijn begint te tellen vanaf de meerderjarigheid (21ste verjaardag of eerder door huwelijk) of wederom vanaf de datum waarop genoemde kennisgeving werd gedaan.

Woonde men na de 21ste verjaardag in één der bovengenoemde landen, dan begint de termijn te tellen op de vertrekdatum vanuit die landen.

Deze bepaling is sedert 1 maart 1964 eveneens van toepassing op met Nederlanders gehuwde vrouwen, die buiten bovengenoemde landen zijn geboren. Voor vrouwen, die vóór 1 maart 1964 reeds waren gehuwd en sedertdien buitenlands verbleven, begint de 10-jarige termijn op laatstgenoemde datum. Zij dienen derhalve attent te zijn op het afleggen van de verklaring tot het behoud van het Nederlanderschap vóór 1 maart 1974.

In geval van twijfel verdient het aanbeveling zich telefonisch of schriftelijk met het Consulaat-Generaal in verbinding te stellen.

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IN ZIJN ARM DE LAMMEREN

Dit verhaal, dat in zeker opzicht allegorisch is, verplaatst ons op een der Zeeuwse eilanden in de twintiger jaren. en vergunt ons een blik in het hart en leven van een kind. Het doet ons denken aan een bloemknop die zich langzaam en gestadig ontplooit om tot volle bloei te komen; doch het weent niet "om bloemen, in den knop gebroken, en voor den uchtend van haar bloei vergaan."

Door
CORNELIUS LAMBREGTSE

(66)

Fransje, die reeds een hele tijd in een strakke houding gestaan heeft, moet even zijn ene been verzetten. Terwijl hij dat doet, springt er een grote groene kikker met een wijde boog op uit het gras. Het enigste schepsel dat zich niet aan Fransje stoort is een grote kruisspin die rustig aan haar halfvoltooide web hangt te weven.

Het is net of hij in het Paradijs is. Daar waren ook allerlei dieren. Alleen waren er daar veel meer en die waren veel groter. Maar die waren niet bang van Adam en liepen er niet vandoor. Integendeel, die kwamen naar hem toe, zodat hij ze strelen kon. Waarom begrijpen deze dieren niet dat Fransje hen ook geen kwaad zou doen en ze eveneens alleen maar aaien zou of er zacht tegen praten? Ze vertrouwen hem zeker niet. Nu, dat is geen wonder. Gemene jongens, zoals Pier, zijn er altijd op uit om dieren te kwellen, door er met stenen naar te gooien of er met pijl en boog op te schieten. En nu vertrouwen de dieren natuurlijk geen enkele jongen meer, ook niet de jongens die veel van beesten houden.

De gedachte aan Pier zou hem onherroepelijk weer aan dat nare voorval herinnerd hebben, indien zijn oog niet plotseling getrokken was geworden door een heel eigenaardig schouwspel een eindje verder in de boomgaard. Ook hier valt overal het zonlicht in lange stroken door het langzaam stervende loverdak. Maar enkele bomen van hem vandaan is daar een grote opening in. Daar had vroeger zeker ook een boom gestaan, die doodgegaan is. Het zonlicht stroomt daar nu ongehinderd in een brede vloed omlaag en legt goud op de gele bladeren van de schoenlapperbossen.

Evenals alle kinderen heeft Fransje een ingeschapen neiging om zijn fantasie te laten gaan en zelfs uit de onregelmatigste vormen iets vertrouwds of bekends te scheppen, zoals hoofden of gestalten uit wolkenstoeten, en zo al meer. Maar hier is het niet zijn fantasie die de vormen dwingt iets voor te stellen, maar de vormen zelf dwingen zijn fantasie iets te zien waar hij in het geheel niet aan gedacht heeft. En wat hem zo treft is ook welhaast onmiskenbaar. Een tamelijk grote bessenstruik die boven de andere uitsteekt, schijnt het meeste zonlicht op te vangen. Bovendien steken die bladeren sterk af tegen een donkere boomstam er een eind verder achter en bewegen zacht op de stille adem van de wind.

Jezus! flitst het door zijn hoofd. Dat lijkt precies op Jezus. Zie maar, heeft donkergoud lang haar, een vriendelijk stralend gezicht, dat schijnt te bewegen of Hij aan het spreken is, en lange mouwen om de uitgestrekte armen. Maar dan neemt Fransje's fantasie de leiding weer over. Weldra zijn de lagere struiken drommen mensen die naar Jezus staan te luisteren. Hij kan nu ook duidelijk mannen en vrouwen onderscheiden, en zelfs kleine guust. Kijk maar, er staan er een paar vlak bij Zijn knieën, en Hij zal zo opnemen en op Zijn schoot zetten. Dan zal Hij Zijn hand op hun hoofd leggen en hen zegenen.

Roerloos en als in een trance staat hij er naar te kijken. Zijn benen willen hem naar dat bijna bovenaardse schouwspel dragen, maar instinktief weet hij dat dan dat wondere fatamorgana uit elkaar zal spatten als een zeepbel. Hij beseft dat als hij dat visioen niet wil verdrijven hij dan rustig moet blijven staan waar hij staat.

De appel, die hij al geruime tijd in zijn ene hand gehouden heeft, is er warm van geworden. Met een kromme vinger wroet hij aldoor in het verdroogde bloesemgaatje. Maar hij is er zich niet van bewust.

Jezus! fluistert hij met droge lippen. En dan valt dat vreemde verlangen weer over hem — eerst aarzelend en onmerkbaar, tot het al sterker en onstuimiger wordt. Het is hetzelfde verlangen dat hij gevoeld heeft op die zondagavond in de kerk onder de preek van dominee Kok. Maar nu is het zelfs intenser en groter, omdat het iets zichtbaars en konkreets heeft om zich op te concentreren. Het doet hem plotseling ook weer denken aan de Vreemdeling die hem vergezelde in zijn wonderschone droom van lang geleden. En aan Vader, als die soms onverwachts zo zacht en teer kan zijn, en aan Moeder, en Kee van Kapelle, en Verplanke, en Jakob onder aan de ladder, en Mozes, en de discipelen, en aan heel de schare gezaligden in de hemel. En zonder het te beseffen of zelfs de woorden te kennen, zegt zijn ziel Datheen na:

O Heer, wanneer komt die dag
Dat ik toch bij U zal wezen
En zien Uw aanschijn geprezen!

Hoe lang hij daar heeft staan mijmeren, weet hij niet, maar hij wordt uit zijn onwezenlijke wereld gerukt door het geritsel van voetstappen in het lang gras en een heldere meisjesstem die roept: Fransje, wae bî-je? En als ze hem ziet, vraagt ze reeds van een afstand: Ei-je à vee appels eraept?

Het is Leentje, die eens komt kijken hoe Fransje het maakt. Hij kijkt haar aan en Leentje schrikt van zijn bleke gelaat. Ongerust vraagt ze zich af of hij ziek is, maar op haar vraag of hij niet goed is, schudt hij zijn hoofd. Dan vraagt ze of hij al een paar van die lekkere appels gegeten heeft. Nee, hij geeft niet veel om appels, geeft hij ten antwoord. Misschien lust hij liever peren, wil Leentje verder weten. Even later spijt het Fransje dat hij daar met ja op geantwoord heeft, want op een toon die een blijde verrassing inhoudt, neemt ze hem bij de hand en leidt hem naar een verdere hoek van de boomgaard, waar een rij lage perebomen staan. Die vallen op door hun buitengewoon grote glanzende bladeren, die nog niet door de herfstadem zijn aangetast, en nog fris donkergroen zijn. Op het eerste gezicht lijkt het of er heel geen peren aan zitten, maar dan ontdekt hij hun lange, slanke vorm en ongewone kleur. De schil glanst niet, zoals die van andere, hem bekende peersoorten, maar is dof en ruw. En daar waar het steeltje ze aan de takken houdt, zijn ze lang en dun om daarna in een ronde bol over te gaan.

Leentje betast er enkele tot ze er een ontdekt die zacht onder de druk van haar vingers voelt. Ier, Fransje, zegt ze, proef die es.

Fransje zet er zijn tanden in en voelt meteen zijn mond vollopen met een verrukkelijk zoet sap. Zoiets heerlijks heeft hij nog nooit geproefd. Leentje plukt er ook een voor zichzelf en samen genieten ze op hun gemak van de heerlijke vrucht. Als de zijne op is, biedt ze hem er nog een aan, en hoewel hij zich voorgenomen had heel geen appels te eten uit vrees voor die nare buikpijn, kan hij de verleiding niet weerstaan en aanvaardt gretig de extra grote peer die Leentje voor hem opzoekt. Hij troost zich gauw met de gedachte dat hij voorheen zijn buikpijn misschien helemaal niet aan het eten van fruit te danken had.

Leentje helpt hem zijn twee kisten vol rapen. Ondertussen babbelt ze over allerlei dingen die hem mogelijk interesseren kunnen. Ze prijst hem dat hij al zo es een grote jongen is, en zo schappelijk werken kan. Dan vraagt ze wat hij worden wil als hij groot is. Paardeknecht, antwoordt hij zonder aarzelen. Maar als Leentje daar, om hem een plezier te doen, wat verder op in wil gaan, valt hij haar in de rede: Mae messchien wor ik giniëns groat!

Leentje kijkt hem verbaasd aan. En dan valt het haar weer op hoe ongewoon wit hij ziet. Ze wil hem afleiden en zegt:

O, mae Fransje, ale kleine guust worren toch groat. Kiek mae es nae je groate broers. Ik wete nog an die net zô kleine waeren as jie!

Ja, mae ale kleine jonksjes worren nie groat! Sommige sturven as ze nog kleine bin. Kiek mae nae dat jonksje uut 'n biebel!

Welk jonksje uut 'n biebel?

E, dat jonksje dat à nae z'n vader goeng kieken op 't land. Toen kreeg 'n een steek van de zunne, en een steutje laeter is 'n esturven.

Leentje heeft geen idee waar hij het over heeft, en even vermoedt ze dat hij een paar verhalen door elkaar haalt.

(Wordt vervolgd)

Deze roman is in boekvorm verschenen bij Uitgeverij T. Wever in Franeker. Het verhaal verschijnt als feuilleton in ons blad met toestemming van de uitgever.

KERKEN IN DE BRANDING

In het handboek der Kerkgeschiedenis van de professoren Bakhuizen van den Brink en J. Lindeboom wordt in hoofdtuk V over "Zijstromingen en wordend Katholicisme" gezegd: "In de 2e eeuw heeft de Christenheid de zelfstandigheid van haar eigenlijke bezit (het Evangelie) tegenover het synkretisme (menging van voorstellingen en gestalten) gehandhaafd. Dat is — zo zeggen de schrijvers — een der belangrijkste feiten der oude kerkgeschiedenis.

De Synode der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland heeft een uitspraak gedaan inzake de kwestie — prof. Kuitert.

Gebleken is — zegt de Synode — dat prof. Kuitert stellig afwijst de gedachte, dat de zonde een noodzakelijke fase in de ontwikkeling van de mens zou zijn. Hoewel prof. Kuitert de poging om het vallen van de mens uit Gods bedoeling in de tijd te localiseren geen zaak van kerkelijk belijden maar van theologische conceptie acht, beschouwt hij de moedwillige ongehoorzaamheid van de mens zelf als een onopgeefbaar kernpunt van het belijden.

Hoewel er vragen aangaande Genesis 2 en 3 zijn overgebleven, meent de Synode dat de discussie over deze zaak kan worden gesloten, vasthoudende aan de uitspraken van de generale Synodes van Amsterdam en Sneek. Een getuigenis zal uitgaan tot de kerken, uitsprekende dat God de wereld goed heeft geschapen, dat de mens in moedwillige ongehoorzaamheid zich van God heeft afgewend en dat deze val en ongehoorzaamheid van onze eerste voorouders, zoals die als een gebeurtenis in Genesis 3 wordt geopenbaard, een fundamentele plaats inneemt in Schrift en belijdenis en van wezenlijk belang is voor de verkondiging van het Evangelie.

Aan de beslissing is een uitvoerige bespreking van het rapport van deputaten, die de gesprekken met prof. Kuitert gevoerd hebben, alsmede van het rapport van de synode-commissie als verslag op het eerste, voorafgegaan.

Tenslotte kwam men met grote meerderheid tot de bovengenoemde conclusie.

Wij laten het oordeel aan de theologen.

Wel mag geconstateerd worden, dat prof. Kuitert niets heeft teruggenomen. Zijn opvatting inzake het Paradijs-verhaal, de evolutie en de toepassing van het heil in de mensengemeenschap hield hij staande.

Alleen heeft hij zijn bedoeling en woordkeuze toegelicht en daarmede hebben zowel deputaten als Synode tenslotte genoegen genomen. Het is nog te vroeg om het effect van dit besluit in de Gereformeerde Kerken af te wegen.

De verzuchting, dat nu de rust in de kerken zal terugkeren lijkt, vrezen wij, een optimistische te zijn.

Het "bezit" is nog niet veilig gesteld.

Een nog zwaarder opgaaf is de kwestie — Wiersinga betreffende zijn opvatting over de verzoening. Ook met deze studentenpredikant voerde een commissie een gesprek.

De Synode besloot het gesprek voort te zetten en daarvoor een deputaatschap te benoemen.

In het rapport dat ter tafel was wordt o.m. gezegd, dat Ds. Wiersinga zich blijft verzetten tegen een ongezonde verindividualisering van het heil, maar onderschrijft de belijdenis van de plaatsbekledende kracht van Christus' lijden en sterven zonder welke er nooit een christelijke gemeente zou zijn geweest.

* * *

De Synode der Hervormde Kerk besloot haar eerder vermeld voornemen om naar aanleiding van het getuigenis (proff. Itterson, van Niftrik, c.s.) een kerkelijke boodschap te doen uitgaan, niet uit te voeren.

De verdeeldheid was in de laatste zitting te groot om tot overeenstemming te komen. De aanbevelingen van de algemene kerkvergadering werden niet aan de orde gesteld omdat slechts 19 van de 55 classes commentaar hadden geleverd.

De nieuwe secretaris-generaal Dr. A. H. van de Heuvel neemt op 1 april 1973 de taak van de huidige secretaris, Ds. F. H. Landman, over.

* * *

Kardinaal Alferink is de eenzaamste kardinaal ter wereld genoemd.

Waar is, dat hij na elke reis naar Rome er vermoeider en zorgelijker uitziet.

Het is duidelijk dat de huidige Paus en zijn raadgevers niets moeten hebben van vernieuwing in en van de kerk, zoals die door het Nederlandse episcopaat, vóór de benoeming van de nieuwe bisschoppen van Rotterdam en Roermond, eenstemmig werd voorgestaan.

De Paus noemt dat het beeld van de Kerk kapot maken.

Sprak Maarten Luther niet van de babylonische gevangenschap der kerk?

En raakt dat vandaag alleen de Rooms-Katholieke kerk?

Cnossen.

Drachten (Holland),
27 nov. 1972.

Het Christelijke Leven

(25)

Ware Toewijding

We zijn nu genaderd tot het punt waar we de rechte betekenis van 'toewijding' kunnen overdenken. We lezen de tweede helft van Romeinen 6, vanaf vers 12 tot het einde. In vers 12 en 13 schrijft Paulus: "Laat dan de zonde niet langer als koning heersen in uw sterfelijk lichaam, zodat gij aan zijn begeerten zoudt gehoorzamen; en stelt uw leden niet langer als wapenen der ongerechtigheid ten dienste van de zonde, maar stelt u ten dienste van God, als mensen die dood zijn geweest, maar thans leven, en stelt uw leden als wapenen der gerechtigheid ten dienste van God." De uitdrukking "zich ten dienste stellen" komt in dit Schriftgedeelte vijfmaal voor.

Velen hebben aangenomen dat deze uitdrukking hetzelfde betekent als "toewijding', echter zonder de eigenlijke draagwijdte van deze woorden nauwkeurig na te gaan. Natuurlijk betekent het toewijding, maar niet in de zin die wij er zo vaak aan geven. Het gaat hier niet om de "toewijding" van onze "oude mens" met zijn aangeboren gevoelens en mogelijkheden, zijn natuurlijke wijsheid, krachten en andere gaven, opdat God daar "gebruik van zou kunnen maken".

Dit komt meteen duidelijk uit in vers 13. Let op de uitdrukking: 'als mensen die dood zijn geweest maar thans leven'. In deze woorden geeft Paulus het tijdstip aan waarop er voor het eerst sprake kan zijn van "toewijding". Hij spreekt hier niet over het aan God wijden van iets dat afkomstig is uit de oude schepping, maar alleen van wat gestorven is, **en weer is opgestaan.** Ik kan mij dàn pas ten dienste van God stellen wanneer ik zeker weet dat mijn oude mens gekruisigd is. Dit is immers Gods volgorde: wij weten dat onze oude mens gekruisigd is; het staat voor ons vast dat we dood zijn voor de zonde; wij stellen ons ten dienste van God.

Wanneer ik werkelijk weet dat ik met Hem gekruisigd ben, staat het voor mij vast dat ik dood ben (vers 6 en 11). En als ik weet dat ik met Hem uit de doden ben opgewekt, dan staat het ook voor mij vast dat ik "levend ben voor God in Christus Jezus" (vers 8 en 11). Dit alles moeten wij in het geloof aanvaarden. Daarna geven we ons aan Hem. In de opstanding is Hij de **oorsprong** van ons leven geworden — ja, Hij IS ons leven; dus kan ik niet anders dan mij Hem ten dienste stellen. Maar zolang ik mijn eigen leven niet in de dood heb gegeven heb ik God niets, maar dan ook niets aan te bieden, want dan is er niets dat God kan aanvaarden van mij, omdat Hij de ganse oude schepping aan het Kruis heeft veroordeeld. De dood heeft alles afgesneden dat niet aan Hem kan toegewijd worden. Alleen de opstanding heeft ware toewijding aan God mogelijk gemaakt. Mij ten dienste stellen van God betekent dat ik voortaan met mijn hele leven Zijn eigendom ben.

Laten we er verder op letten dat dit "ten dienste stellen" ziet op de leden van ons lichaam — dat lichaam waarvan we eerder gezien hebben dat het "werkeloos" was ten opzichte van de zonde (Rom. 6:6). God verwacht dat ik al mijn leden, al mijn vermogens, nu beschouw als Zijn onvervreemdbaar eigendom.

Het is geweldig om te ontdekken dat ik niet langer van mijzelf ben maar van Hem. Wanneer ik tien gulden in mijn zak heb die van mij zijn, dan kan ik ermee doen wat ik wil. Maar als ik ze voor iemand anders moet bewaren, dan kan ik dat niet en dan mag ik ze ook niet verliezen. Echt christelijk leven begint met deze ontdekking. Hoevelen van ons durven hun tijd, hun geld en hun gaven niet naar eigen believen te gebruiken omdat ze beseffen dat zij van de Here zijn en niet van onszelf? Zijn wij er ons werkelijk zo sterk van bewust het eigendom van Iemand Anders te zijn dat wij geen stuiver van ons geld, geen uur van onze tijd, noch iets van onze verstandelijke of lichamelijke vermogens nutteloos durven gebruiken?

Op zekere dag ging een broeder eens op reis met de trein en trof in de coupé drie mensen aan die geen Christenen waren en die, om de tijd te doden, een spelletje wilden gaan kaarten. Omdat ze een vierde man nodig hadden vroegen ze deze broeder mee te doen. "Tot mijn spijt moet ik u teleurstellen," zei hij, "ik kan niet meedoen, want ik heb mijn handen niet meegebracht." "Wat bedoelt u?" was de verbijsterde vraag. "Deze handen zijn niet van mij," zei hij, en toen begon hij uit te leggen hoe zijn leven van eigenaar was verwisseld. Die broeder beschouwde daadwerkelijk de leden van zijn lichaam als het eigendom van de Here en niemand anders. Dat is ware heiligheid.

Paulus zegt "Stelt uwe leden om dienstbaar te zijn der gerechtigheid tot heiligmaking," Rom. 6:19 Statenvertaling. Laten we dit dan ook werkelijk doen: Ons stellen ten dienste van God.

B. Boulogne.

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(Adv.)

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'THIS THE SEASON

by MARIANNE PELC

Everyone was standing around trying to decide where Mary and Joseph should go. Mrs. Gibbs thought December 20th was too early to put baby Jesus in his crib, and Father Gorden wanted the Christmas tree lights to outline the eighteen foot cross outside the church. He and Mr. Gariboldi were discussing how slippery the roof of the church was and the hazards involved in walking accross it to reach the cross. It had been snowing heavily for an hour, and they mumbling, voiced their concern about anyone going up on the roof. Mr. Gibbs had just finished hanging choir angels on the telephone poles in the parking lot. He worked for the telephone company, and as he put it, "could climb in any weather". He lit a White Owl and yelled to Father Gorden who was trudging up a ladder to the roof, "Why don't you let us men do that Father, you're going to kill yourself up there." Father Gorden backed slowly down the ladder "I'm going inside for awhile, do whatever you like. I'm so tired, I just can't do everything on my own, carry the weight all the time," he said, "I'm like a dead battery, I . . . I need to be recharged." He kicked the wet snow of his shoes and hurried into the church. "They should have never sent him to this parish," Mrs. Feeny said, "he just doesn't know how to communicate with the people." "I wish Father Petz was still here, I just loved him, this one is so unfriendly." "Well I think he's having a nervous breakdown," Mrs. Gibbs interrupted, "did you see how emotional he got, he just doesn't have the personality for a priest. Why he was actually crying at Mass one day."

I knew no more work would get done outside so I went inside to see how the tree decorating was coming along. My mother was busy sawing tree trunks so they would fit into the stands. The three Gariboldi children had started to decorate one tree next to the altar. They seemed to think that a plastic poinsettia would look very nice at the top of the tree. "We Don't Want that plastic poinsettia up there, Linda, "I heard my mother say in a familiar tone. I knew the kid got the message, just like my brothers and I always did. "That little snip is bound and determined to put that flower on that tree," my mother whispered to me as she prepared to saw another trunk. Just then the decorated tree started to tip and she ran off to catch it before it fell.

I walked to the back of the church and went into the soundproof cry room. I was finally alone and sat down next to a miniature clay cave that everyone prayed would dry in time to shelter Mary, Joseph, and the baby. I was trying to decide what made me come and participate in this chaos. After-all, I was an agnostic, but I suppose it was just one of those times when I was really down and figured that word to the man upstairs, just for the fun of it, wouldn't hurt. Besides, it was Christmas time, what better place to begin anew, throw off the old and be reborn into faith and all that.

I knew when I came home for Christmas break and asked my mother to wake me for 8:00 a.m. mass she nearly went into shock. I'd had twelve years of "good" solid Catholic education, and my parents were convinced that it was a total waste of time and money. The only time it seemed that a religious "happening" had taken place within me was when I announced at my eighth grade graduation party that I wanted to enter the convent. This brought about a reaction of laughter and tears, and nothing was ever said about it again. After that the Provindence High School or girls put me in a navy blue uniorm and saddle shoes and for the next four years gave me D's in Religion I-IV. Notes were sent home that I wasn't producing up to my maximum potential, and it seemed like I was always getting sent on little visits to the Polish priest who used to be an alcoholic; or chosen to carry the nun's book bag, or take down the Christmas tree in the convent. I figured out right away that they were using the "be a friend" psychology on me.

When I was well into my Junior year of high school, I had developed quite a fine reputation as the only atheist in the school. I wrote themes denouncing religion and God as unnecesary to man's existence. I put my ideas into action by not receiving holy communion when the entire student body was herded into the gym for first Friday mass. Later I became a little bolder and skipped mass completely by hiding in the girl's washroom. The nuns always came in and checked for ditchers, but I always stood on the toilet so they couldn't see my feet when they looked under the door of each stall. Every Sunday a battle royal ensued concerning my attendance at mass. I usually conceded because my father became quite irate, and I had no plans of being a fanatic about the issue or ending up a martyr for my cause. "Father Gorden came over today," my mother would say, "he asked me why you're not attending mass. How do you think I feel?" Her eyes would always fill with tears, and I knew this was a realy big thing with her. I didn't know why she got so upset; I figured it was my life and I should be free to choose.

Things continued like this till my graduation from high school, then no more was said about it and I slept on Sunday mornings. My parents and I had very little communication about important things. Or at least things that seemed important to me. Everytime I'd get up the courage to tell them an important decision, they would react the same way they did at my graduation party. "Don't be crazy, you're just going through a stage," my mother would say. How well I remember, the convent stage, the Peace Corps stage, the atheism stage, and the psychiatrist stage.

The ground was covered with a fine white blanket of snow, only the sidewalk outside the church had been marred by humanity. I went outside to see how the hanging of the lights was coming along. The idea for outlining the cross had been abandoned, and the lights were hanging from the matrix of the cross like a single streamer on a maypole. They ran from that point at an angle to the roof of the awning over the entrance. On this roof, Mr. Gibbs was being guided by several onlookers as to where the blinking statues of Mary and Joseph should be placed. Father Gorden had also ascended to the roof and was putting a large brick in the crib so it would not be blown away by a sudden gust of wind. Inside, my mother was spraying the trees with artificial snow so they would look realistic. Some of the children were sweeping up pine needles and broken ornaments, and others were hanging wreaths. I went upstairs to the choir lot and sat down at the big pipe organ. I was just about to break into a chorus of Misty when I heard Father Gonden's sickly voice yell at some children who were blowing out vigil candles.

I couldn't believe everything that was happening. Was this where one came to think, meditate, find peace? It was all so chaotic, so much what I didn't want. I was really trying to believe, I hope HE knew that I was. I don't know what kind of a person this God was or what HE wanted. Could he possibly enjoy people singing off key, funerals, green winter coats with purple spring hats, collections, tithing, the same expressionless faces every Sunday, blinking plastic statutes and neon signs flashing JESUS SAVES, BABY! I didn't know, all I wanted was peace; none of the options. All I wanted was for this Jesus to zap up right in front of me and put his hand on my shoulder and say let's get some coffee and talk. I didn't think that was asking too much. Just to have the chance to ask him a few questions, see if he really wanted the church decorated, and if it was okay to play Misty on the pipe organ, and would I ever fall in love and get married or should I have entered the convent. I mean I couldn't be the only person who thought this stuff. I just wanted to ask him good human stuff, things that happen to people, not lambs of God. What if I brought a nice Jewish boy home, would he give me a break?

The lights in the church began to dim one by one. All the children ran outside to play in the snow. The trees were in place, the clay cave was dazzling under a pink spotlight, Mary and Joseph sat contentedly on the roof blinking to their heart's content, and the choir angels watched over Father Gorden as he maneuvered hist riding lawnmower with the scoop on the front through the snowdrits in the parking lot.

"Well, I'm glad that's over with," my mother said. "I wish these people would leave their kids home, they mess up everything." She stood at the back of the church and gazed at all the decorations. "It looks nice, doesn't it," she said.

New World approaching

Outside the horizon
a Star looms large
in the spread of its beams
(incredibly true)
is miraculous
power of healing.

Poisonous streams
flow sparkeling pure
reflecting light
as diamonds do.

The wind has changed
for now it blows
a hilarious tune

round the transformed cross
even the crippled
are dancing.

The old trees
(which endured so much)
lift their bent limbs
and
broadly stand smiling.

Dee Broer

The softening snow of December makes the country side asleep under winter's thick pure mantle.

The Christian Life

(25)

True Consecration

Our study has now brought us to the point where we are able to consider the true nature of consecration. We have before us the second half of Romans 6 from verse 12 to the end. In Rom. 6: 12, 13 we read: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof; neither present your members unto sins as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourself unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." The operative word here is 'present' and this word occurs five times in the chapter.

Many have taken this word 'present' to imply consecration without looking carefully into its content. Of course that is what it does mean, but not in the sense in which we so often understand it. It is not the consecration of our 'old man' with his instincts and resources, his natural wisdom, strength, and other gifts, to the Lord for Him to use.

This will be at once clear from verse 13. Note there the clause 'as alive from the dead.' Paul says: 'Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead'. This defines for us the point at which consecration begins. For what is here referred to is not the consecration of anything belonging to the old creation, but only of that WHICH HAS PASSED THROUGH DEATH TO RESURRECTION. The 'presenting' spoken of is the outcome of my 'knowing' my old man to be crucified. Knowing, reckoning, presenting to God: that is the divine order.

When I really know I am crucified with Him, then spontaneously I reckon myself dead (verses 6 and 11); and when I know that I am raised with Him from the dead, then likewise I reckon myself 'alive unto God in Christ Jesus' (verses 9 and 11), for both the death and the resurrection side of the Cross are to be accepted by faith. When this point is reached, then giving myself to Him follows. In resurrection He is the source of my life, indeed He IS my life; so I cannot but present everything to Him, for all is His, not mine. But without passing through death I have NOTHING to consecrate, nor is there anything God can accept, for He has condemned all that is of the old creation to the Cross. Death has cut off all that CANNOT be consecrated to Him, and resurrection alone has made consecration possible. Presenting myself to God means that henceforth, I consider my whole life as belonging to Him.

Let us further observe that this 'presenting' relates to the members of my body — that body which, as we saw earlier, is now 'unemployed' in respect of sin. 'Present yourselves . . . and your members,' says Paul, and again: 'Present your members' (Rom. 6, 13, 19). God requires of me that I now regard all my members, all my faculties, as belonging wholly to Him.

It is a great thing when I discover I am no longer my own but His. If the ten shillings in my pocket belong to me, then I have full authority over them. But if they belong to another who has committed them to me in trust, then I cannot buy what I please with them, and I dare not lose them. Real Christian life begins with knowing this. How many of us know, that, because Christ is risen, we are therefore alive 'unto God' AND NOT UNTO OURSELVES? How many of us dare not use our time or money or talents as we would, because we realize they are the Lord's, not ours? How many of us have such a strong sense that we belong to Another that we dare not squander a shilling of our money, or an hour of our time, or any of our mental or physical powers?

On one occasion a brother was travelling by train and found himself in a carriage together with three non - Christians who, in order to beguile the time, wished to play cards. Lacking a fourth to complete the game, they invited this brother to join them. 'I am sorry to disappoint you,' he said, 'but I cannot join your game for I have not brought my hands with me.' 'Whatever do you mean?' they asked in blank astonishment. 'This pair of hands does not belong to me,' he said, and then there followed the explanation of the transfer of ownership that had taken place in his life. That brother regarded the members of his body as belonging entirely to the Lord. That is true holiness. Paul says, 'Present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification (A.V. 'holiness')' Rom. 6:19. Make it a definite act: 'Present yourselves unto God."

B. BOULOGNE

From Watchman Nee 'The Normal Christian Life' Victory Press, London and Eastbourne.

Measles - Rubella Vaccine Program

A measles-rubella vaccination program for the protection of children between the ages of one year through the first year of school entry has been instituted by the Ontario Ministry of Health.

In announcing the program today, Health Minister Richard T. Potter, M.D., said that all areas of the province have been stocked with vaccine. All practising physicians have been notified of sources of vaccine supplies and have received a recommended immunization schedule.

"It is important that all such children receive their vaccination as soon as possible after their first birthday to ensure protection during the entire pre-school and school period. This calls for a co-operative effort by parents and practising physicians."

The combined vaccine will be free. It will provide protection against both measles (red) and rubella (German measles) in a single injection. Infants under the age of 12 months should not be given the vaccine because the presence of maternal antibodies may interfere with the immunizing response.

Complications often develop in a child who contracts measles. These include pneumonia, convulsions, middle ear infection and inflammation of the brain.

Rubella vaccination of young children will also reduce the risk of infection among women in child-bearing years who have not had the disease. Rubella contracted by a woman during the early months of pregnancy can result in the birth of a baby with serious congenital abnormalities. The earlier in pregnancy the fetus is infected, the more severe the handicaps may be.

The World Around Us

FOUR MORE YEARS OF NIXON ?

It was about a week before the U.S. elections and the headlines shouted, "Peace is Near"; an exhuberant Henry Kissinger (or Dr. Kissinger as he is now always referred to) could be seen smiling and waving coming down airplane ramps or getting in or out of limousines. Richard Nixon spoke of an honourable peace for America but never managed to explain what it meant to have peace with honour after a 20 year undeclared war. Somewhere in the back pages of the same paper one could find the latest report on the Watergate Scandal, or McGovern's attack on the administration for its slackness in providing housing and medical care for the poor.

It is now a few weeks after the election and it has just been announced that there will be a 9 day break in the peace discussions. It now looks as if the peace is not nearly as close as the world was led to believe before the election. Did Kissinger and Nixon purposely put an optimistic face on the proceedings in Paris, did they know all along that the draft treaty could not be accepted by them and that they would have to spend a lot more time in bargaining? Perhaps it is not nice to question the motives of Richard Nixon, but after a 20 year war, and numerous announcements by politicians that the end is in sight, the average person, unable to do anything about the outcome of this war is getting rather sceptical. Nixon overcame the scepticism of the American voter and won by a landslide, but what is the present situation? How can one help but be sceptical?

A New England newspaper decided to take all those Pentagon body counts seriously in 1965 and started keeping a ledger. Last month the newspaper was able to announce the end of the Vietnam War. According to the collected information and statistics dispensed by the American defence department, the United States has killed every man, woman and child in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The stalemate in the peace negotiations has given the defence department a few months extra time and it has used it well. Shipments of war materials to the Saigon government has been increased at a drastic rate. Right now the South Vietnamese air force is the third largest in the world. That means that Saigon has more planes at its disposal than either France or Great Britain. The first question a sceptical outsider might well ask is why there is this need for so much war material when the peace negotiations are almost completed? What exactly does an honourable peace mean?

While the negotiations went on, the bombardment of the North continued in almost unprecedented ferocity. The United States has now dropped more bombs on North Vietnam than it dropped on all its enemies during the Second World War and the Korean War. How does this fit into the picture of peace? Why, if one is negotiating for peace, and the settlement is so close, is it necessary to continue to bomb? Nixon and his military advisors must use a rational that is beyond the grasp of the common man. If massive bombardments, and half a million troops (American) on the ground, and heavy off-shore shelling by the navy, could not produce a victory in the Johnson era, is heavy bombing now supposed to yield results other than a lot of dead or maimed people? How does all this fit into the honourable peace Nixon is so eager to get?

A time of peace should be a time of forgiveness, of forgetting the past and moving into a future without rancour that existed before peace was made. But here was Richard Nixon a few days before the election saying: "It would be the most immoral thing I could think of." What would be so immoral? Making war, having his party conduct espionage against his political opponent? No, the most immoral thing Nixon could think of is to give amnesty to deserters and draft evaders. Perhaps it is not so strange that the common man is a little sceptical.

Even if a peace agreement is reached, what will happen to Vietnam? Judging by the reactions of President Thieu to the Paris peace talks, there is little hope that he will be happy to hold free elections in his country. Thieu has also used the "breathing spell" in the negotiations to good advantage. Tens of thousands of known or suspected Communist sympathizers have been added to South Vietnam's already very large prison population. This does not appear to be a concilliatory attitude towards the people he may have to form a government with after the elections. But then, does anyone really believe that elections will be held in Vietnam? A long time ago, in 1954, there were also elections to be held in Vietnam, but then there was a rumour that the country might go Communist and President Eisenhower sent the first few million dollars and the first few hundred "military advisers".

Since that time, several million people died, more were maimed, more yet were made homeless, uprooted from their villages and forced to live in camps. Governments have come and gone in Saigon, some were very corrupt, others less so; some were overthrown with the backing of the Americans, others fell from their own incompetence. At least 141 billion dollars have been poured in Vietnam; the economy is wrecked, but the generals have grown rich. And now these generals, sitting on one of the most powerfully equipped armed forces are to stop fighting and start working with their enemy. It all seems a little hard to believe.

But Nixon cannot leave Thieu and friends in the lurch. He has to support them, not because they are so much better than the Communists, but simply because Richard Nixon cannot afford to lose face. Which returns us to the question of the honourable peace: what exactly can be gotten out of the Vietnam mess than is honourable? The old argument that America is fighting Communism cannot be used anymore. Nixon has visited the two big Communist countries and is actively trading and negotiating with them. There is thus no logical reason for continuing the war (although there might be political reasons but these can, of course, not be talked about publicly). What is left for Nixon is the plight of the more than 500 American P.O.W.s known to be held by the Communists throughout Indochina.

In many speeches Nixon has mentioned that his prime aim is to bring the P.O.W.s home. This is an understandable desire, but is it a reason for massively bombing North Vietnam until the last minute. The bombing will not bring those men home sooner, nor will it produce better terms for Thieu and friends. But it will kill many more innocent people. How can this be reconciled with an honourable peace? Is it surprising that many people react very sceptically when Richard Nixon promises us peace?

J. J. Bout

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VARIA AFRICANA

Some Impressions and Observations Resulting from a Visit to Nigeria

by Dr. R. Kooistra

6.

FRIDAY NIGHT AND A BUSY SATURDAY

Whom more did we meet?

At the end of our last article we promised to introduce you to several members of M'kar's Hospital. We mentioned already Mr. Alan Reberg, the hospital administrator, who gave us the guided tour. In the course of this we came to the laboratory where we met Mr. Leonard Gabrielse who with great pride showed us around in his domain. It was impressive to see that much is done with relatively few means. You must also keep in mind that in case some of the equipment breaks down, it may take many months before the right parts have arrived from overseas. It is therefore important that those who work in Africa are inventive, creative people who are able to make many repairs and replacements by themselves. The people of the M'kar garage, Mr. Harry Faber and Mr. George Schutt, are such people and the builders, Mr. Donald Bremer and Mr. Fred Feikema are just as creative. Together they fix a lot of machinery they would never have touched if they had stayed home.

From the hospital we returned to the home of the de Jong's and from his house we were given a Honda ride to the home of Dr. and Mrs. G. Paul Groen, where we enjoyed a delicious supper. Dr. Groen remembered that he had spoken in Toronto once and I remembered some of the slides he had shown us on that occasion. Dr. Groen is the doctor in charge, the *doctor-director* as we might call him in the Netherlands. He is assisted by two other doctors. At the time we were in M'kar they both were Canadians: Dr. John VanderKooy and Dr. Peter Greidanus. Dr. VanderKooy is married and hails from Simcoe, Ontario. We did not talk to him in person, though I saw him driving past on his Honda. After all I am very sorry that we did not really meet him. We did not do this since Dr. VanderKooy was very busy then; his wife had just given birth to their first baby, a girl. But I regret this, for Dr. John is a brother to Corrie and Bettie and many other VanderKooy girls, who lived in Toronto for several years.

The other doctor was Peter Greidanus. To him we talked on two occasions, in M'kar on Sept. 23rd and in Jos on Oct. 1st. Peter is a brother of the campus minister of Toronto, Rev. Morris Greidanus and of Dr. Sidney Greidanus, the pastor of Clarkson. Father and mother Greidanus live in Edmonton, as our readers there certainly will know. Dr. Peter Greidanus was doing part of his internship in M'kar hospital and could in this way give very valuable assistance to doctors Groen and VanderKooy at a time that they were short-staffed.

After our visit to the Groen family Mr. Koops and I returned to our African, round guesthouse. Mr. Koops suggests in his notes that we made this trip also on the Honda, though I don't remember this.

Home after so much walking and talking the natural inclination is to give the body and the mind some rest. However, in the missionary situation in which we found ourselves, this was not going to be the case.

I started looking around in the house for a kerosine lamp and soon I discovered one with matches and all.

"Well," said Mr. Koops, "don't you want to go to bed?"

"Listen," I answered, "if at 10 p.m. the light quits on us, this lamp will help me to finish my lecture notes."

Drawing water in Nigeria

Indeed, I needed light a little longer than just 10 p.m. On the missionary compound at about 15 minutes to 10 the light winks an eye to inform you that you have 15 minutes to make it to your bed. At 10 p.m. the chuck-chuck of the diesel generator stops and all is quiet and dark.

Remember that I mentioned that in the morning of that day at the airstrip I got a note from Rev. Tim Monsma via his wife. In this letter I read: "You are invited to give a lecture to the pastors in training in Uavande . . . You can speak English and what you say will be translated into the Tiv language."

Not too long ago I had written an article for The Banner on the *cosmic meaning* of Christ, which made me decide — audaciously — to lecture to the Tiv pastors school on *Africa as a New Religious Battleground.*

That evening I sat down at my table in the porch with the kerosine lamp providing the light. There I sat, almost outside in the hot, humid, dark African night. I was reminded of words written some forty years ago by Miss Johanna Veenstra, who by the way was quite an artist with her pen. She describes in one of her letters how she sits down in the darkness and silence around her and how she looks at these many different, small insects, you cannot keep out and who fly around your lamp and often sit down on your paper. If I remember well she tells of a deep, serene peace she felt at that time. I felt this too. Small, almost lost in the vastness of the inpenetrable African night and yet so close to heaven and so close to God! I wondered who I was that I might sit there at that table in our temporary home at the B.L.S. and that I might talk tomorrow to a class of future ministers?

The work went well and got done and I slept relaxed and deep.

COFFEE AND TRIP

The next morning we went early to the Bremer's home for breakfast. After that we met Dr. Peter Greidanus, who came to see us, during his coffeebreak at the hospital.

Something else happened too that morning. We drank coffee at the home of Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Kotze. Mr. Kotze is the Administrator of the Leprosy Settlement and with his wife he makes up one of the very few missionary families of South Africa still left on our field in Nigeria. When we arrived, there were already other visitors. Another South African couple had arrived with a Dutch couple and their young children, all serving an other branch of the Sudan United Missions. How amazed we were when we discovered that these Dutch people belonged to the *Oud Gereformeerde Gemeenten* (they call themselves *Netherland Reformed Church* in Canada, if I am right). As you know, the people belonging to this group are usually deeply concerned about their own salvation and have very little hope that they will be accepted. Their idea of God is more that of a God of wrath than of love. Not much mission work is done by these people. And yet, one of them works in Nigeria for a branch of the Evangelical S.U.M.!

Relatives with food for patients

Is this not beautiful? The church may not be ready and may not have a mission field, yet her members go when they hear the call to bring the good news to others far away.

Mrs. Kotze is a remarkable woman. She loves Nigeria, and she loves her work. She is part of it. And — what I should have said first perhaps — she loves her God and her Saviour. She is a woman who has been a great help for her husband. She is a missionary in her own rights. She has adopted some African orphans as her children. We were told that the Kotze family was Nigerianized to such an extent that they do not take a full vacation every three years. They leave for Pretoria, South Africa, but are usually back after four weeks instead of after half a year. They say that in the year of furlough Mrs. Kotze weeps twice: first when in the big church in Pretoria she listens to the majestic pipe-organ and the second time when she is back and hears the drums again in the worship service in Nigeria. I think that she would say that no matter how much the pipe-organ meant to her, she would rather worship the rest of her life with only drums, than with only the organ.

I talked with Mrs. Kotze one evening for a long time about the work and also about the South-African *apartheid* politics. I am happy to report that I have not met one South-African missionary willing to say one word in favour of the *apartheid.* Several were deeply worried about the future of their native country. I heard a lot of sighs and saw sad eyes which seemed to pray: "O God, be merciful to our native land."

In the exchange of greetings and thoughts the morning hours went fast. Soon it was 10:30 and there our driver was, David, with a missionary landrover to take us to Uavande. It was a rough road. But David is a very good and steady driver. He avoids many of the potholes and after some three hours we arrive at Uavande at the home of Rev. and Mrs. Tim Monsma.

The reddish, gravel road reminds me of the condition in which I found many secondary roads in Alberta and Northern B.C. in the 1950s. Along the road we see many people: most of them travel on foot, the women carrying food or pails with milk on their heads; some possess bicycles and a few drive even motorbikes. Furthermore there is public transportation; here and there a cab, but mainly the lorry or mammywagon. These are trucks with benches along the sides and in the middle and sometimes just trucks with lots of passengers sitting on the freight-goods: they are always loaded. We wondered especially about the boys hanging on to these trucks on the outside — only later we found out that these are actually the conductors who, while the vessel is speeding along, perform their dangerous balancing cat-walks in an attempt to collect the money for the fare from each passenger.

THE VERNACULAR PASTORS SCHOOL

We were welcomed most heartily by the Monsma's — we had lunch with them and at 2:30 I began my lecture on the African religious war. I explained how the heart of Africa was still animistic, dedicated to a magic nature worship and how Africa is influenced from the North by the mighty Islam and from the East by Hinduism and Bhuddism, whereas from the modern secularism compete for the West the Christian religion plus a surrender of the heart and soul of the African.

In my lecture I try to explain also how often young Africans come from an animistic tradition, become influenced by the Christian religion and mission while in high school but when they finally study at the universities in their own country or overseas they are victimized by a secularism which, at most, adheres to some kind of humanism. Some go the whole spectrum, from animist to agnostic.

Rev. Monsma (or should I say Professor Monsma?) translated my speech almost without hesitation in the Tiv language and that he did a good job of it became later very clear from the questions that were asked. Africans are *eager* learners. Here too these future pastors really digged into the discussion, after two hours at 5:30 p.m. they were still going strong, but I was becoming tired. As usually I asked Mr. Koops in the end whether he had to add a few words to my speech — which he always did. We always made fun of this point of the agenda. I would usually say that Mr. Koops often disagreed with me while being a consistory member, but that we nevertheless were great friends and brothers in the Lord, so that at the end we always shook hands with each other. I think I tried to explain how we liked to be *intimate enemies.* Mr. Koops was always quick to capitalize on this handshake by saying: "You see, Dr. Kooistra is a smart man — by the end of the meeting he has discovered that I was right." After a good laugh from the audience Mr. Koops would then conclude with some words of encouragement and love for these young and new churches of Nigeria.

WHAT IS R.T.C.N.?

Now you should really try to understand whom we addressed that Saturday afternoon. This was a class of the Pastors *training in the vernacular.* This school is not to be confused with the R.J.C.N., the Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, which is the counterpart of the J.C.N.N., the Theological College of Northern Nigeria in Bukuru.

The school I taught on Saturday is going to be faced out, Ni-

(Continued on page 13)

VARIA AFRICANA

(Continued from page 12

geria and the Tiv Church has come to a point that all pastors training can take place in English. All theological students from now on will have enough secondary school training to be able to read and understand English.

Rev. Monsma is now teaching for the last year in Tiv, but he has consented to stay for one more year in Nigeria and will teach next year the Reformed Theological Seminary — the new campus which is built presently in the M'kar close to the landing strip.

My conclusion at the end of that afternoon, after I had answered many questions — and some very deep and to-the-point-ones— was that Rev. Monsma must have been a good teacher for his pastors school, for these students, older and younger ones, knew indeed how to formulate their questions. Of course, the quality of education is of the greatest importance in Tiv country and in Nigeria in general since these pastors will be the cultural leaders in their environment in the near future.

DAY IS DONE

Tired and thankful we had supper that night at the other home of this small compound, that of Miss Nancy Chapel, the prin ipal of Uavanda's girls school. I will tell somewhat more about this school in a future article dealing with edu ation in particular. Miss Nancy Chapel is a very outspoken lady, a teacher who has really given herself wholeheartedly to her girls and her school.

At the home of the Monsma's we found something very special: a swimming pool — we go for a dip before we retire. Next day will be Sunday and we must get up rather ear'y for we will worship in Shangev, some 16 miles to the South along a narrow bush path.

TAKING THE UNDERGROND TO THE 16TH CENTURY

(By DERK KINNANE)

Amsterdam, with a population of about 1,000,000, is suffering from transport snarls, like most big cities. So the city fathers are building an underground railway and last January excavations for the line were underway in the Waterlooplein, the large, open square that is the site of Amsterdam's flea market.

The workmen digging up the square began to find curious bits and pieces of metal and what turned out to be food preserved by centuries-long burial. City officials took an interest in the finds and called in a young archaeologist, J. M. Baart, who was studying at the University of Amsterdam Institute of Pre- and Proto history.

The city had no archaeological department as such, but Mr. Baart was already doing archaeological work there, exploring the site of Olof's Gate, the oldest and most important of mediaeval Amsterdam's gates, situated at what is today the beginning of Warmoesstraat.

Mr. Baart established that the workmen building the metro, as the underground is called locally, had stumbled upon the remains of three 16th century Dutch ships. He was then put in charge of an archaeological service created as part of the overall construction project with both the Amsterdam Historical Museum and the Public Works Office as his employers.

The Waterlooplein discovery is especially interesting because of the antiquity of some of the finds. Nothing much is known about the site of the square prior to the 16th century, when Amsterdam burgeoned and became the most important port in Europe. The area lay outside the bounds of the mediaeval city, defined today by the Warmoesstraat on the east, the Nieuwendijk on the west and the Dam, with the Royal Palace, on the south. The north side of the settlement was bounded by sea water.

Along with 16th century German stoneware, a 17th century forgery of a Spanish silver coin and other trinkets of the same era, the Waterlooplein finds include a 15th century pewter pilgrim's badge, made in Rome, a 15th century dagger, and a possibly 14th century "kidney" dagger.

The surprise caused by these finds points up that not too much is known about the early history of Amsterdam. The first written reference to the people of "Amstelledamme" (or the dam on the Amstel river) is dated 1275. Some potsherds have been found dating back to the 12th or 13th century. And the remains of a house built in the first half of the 14th century have been excavated three to four metres (10 to 13 feet) under the present-day Number 49 on the Damrak. The house was built with stone sides and back and a fine wooden front. Timber taken from ships was used in its construction, particularly for the pile foundation driven into swampy land that had been reinforced with earth filling.

To return to the ships under the Waterlooplein; they were found lying five to six metres (16 to 20 feet) below street level. Mr. Baart thinks they may have been used in the trade with the towns stretched along the coasts of the North and Baltic seas.

Later, he surmises, the vessels were loaded with stones and sunk to help fill in a sea ditch, part of the man-made waterways that were precursors to the system of handsome canals which became the pride of Amsterdam in the 17th century and remain a most felicitous example of pioneer urban planning.

Mr. Baart was able to inspect only about nine metres (30 feet) of the ships' remains as the rest is inaccessible under buildings that edge the square.

Fortunately, the municipality is planning to put up new offices and houses on the site of the present buildings. When these come down, Mr. Baart will have a chance to inspect the remaining parts of the ships.

(UNESCO FEATURES)

WHO KNOWS WHEN YOU, MY CHILD BEGAN

Who knows when you, my child, began
For far before this hour came
God called you by a special name
And held your soul within His hand.

Ah knit you were within my womb
So intricate and small you were
But long before you first did stir
God saw you far beyond the tomb.

He has forever known your ways
Your face was gently formed by Him
He shaped your body limb by limb
And numbered all your given days.

Should I then fear for you?

Christine Farenhorst Praamsma

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door A. M. Lindeboom

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door Prof. Herman Ridderbos

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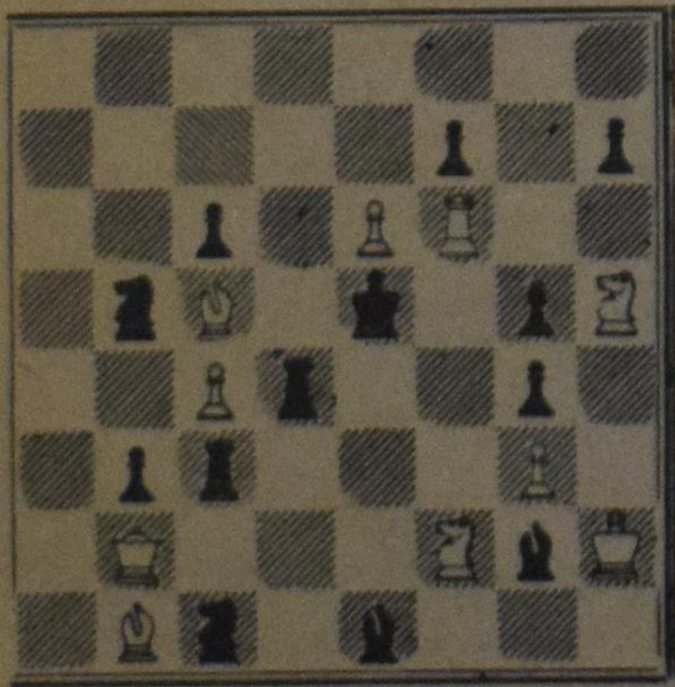
Editor: Pete Layer

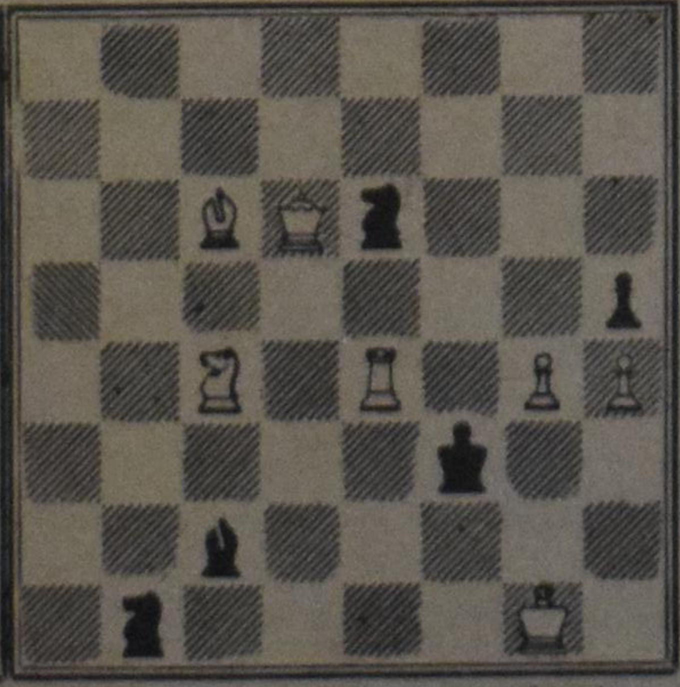
SECOND SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN DECEMBER

#510
J. H. B. Feldbrugge, Holland 1946
13



3 mover 10 3 pts.

#511
A. V. Galetsni, Russia 1892
5



2 mover 7 2 pts.

NOTES:

1. Here is the last series in the year. You won't have to spend the whole Christmas Holidays on these, although they are a bit more challenging than the first series of this month.
2. The Dutch specimen, #510, is crowded in places, but most pieces have enough room for lots of action. Key, threat, and all variations, please.
3. Are you wondering what the pawns are doing on the rook's file in #511? Maybe their presence will give you a clue! The correct key and threat, if any, will give you two points.
4. New Solvers, don't despair, just try to checkmate the black King, with white to move, and send in your answers. There is a small pamphlet still available for you explaining contest rules.
5. The deadline for all the December problems #508-511 is Jan. 20, 1973. Five days more for those outside of Ontario.

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With thanks to the Lord, and great joy we announce the birth of our daughter and sister

MARSHA JAYLENE

Born 25 November, 1972.
Bert & Sandra Strobosser, nee Boer.
Alan, Sharon, Yvonne, Lenore, Brenda, Marilyn, Carol, Howard, and Sandra.
R.R. 1, Jarvis, Ont.

We rejoice in the providential care of our wonderful covenant God.

From Bangladesh He brought into our home our adopted daughter and sister

JAMILA HEERA

She is 3 years old, and beautiful. We love her very much.

Henry & Margaret Eshuis,
Sonya,
Jim,
Mark.
Barrie, November 27, 1972.

Mr. & Mrs. J. DeGroot, Sarnia (Ont.) are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter

ALBERTINA
to
MICHAEL VAN DER WEELE

son of Mr. & Mrs. E. Van Der Weele, Worth (Ill.), U.S.A.

The wedding will take place D.V. Saturday, December 16, 1972, at 11 A.M. in the Chapel of Trinity College, Palos Height, Ill.

Prof. Dr. M. Vrieze officiating.

Future address:
Boulevard 107, Katwijk,
The Netherlands (temp.).

Mr. and Mrs. Henderiekus Van Zwol, No. 1 Binkley Court, Millgrove, Ont., are happy to announce the marriage of their daughter

LOTTIE
to
Mr. TED FENNEMA

son of Mr. and Mrs. John Fennema of Hamilton, Ont., on Saturday, January 13, 1973 in the Christian Reformed Church of Burlington, Ont. Rev. G. Ringnalda officiating.

Future address:
2096 Edinburgh Dr.,
Burlington, Ont.

With thankfulness to the Lord, we hope to celebrate on December 16, 1972, the 30th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents

KOERT SIEDERS
and
ROELIE SIEDERS-BROEKEMA

Their thankful children:
Jo-Ann Lee, Burlington
— Warren
— Steven
Henry and Grace Sieders, Burlington
— Denise
— Andrea
Jake and Jane Sieders, R.R. #1, Moffat, Ont.
— Alyson
— Jake
Kurt and Lynda.
547 Dynes Rd.,
Burlington, Ont.

The Lord willing, on December 28, 1972 we hope to celebrate with our dear parents and grandparents:

JARICH DE GRAAF
and
MEINTJE DE GRAAF-DIJKSTRA

their 35th wedding anniversary.

Let us rejoice and be glad, let us praise His greatness. Text: Rev. 19:7A.

Their thankful children:
Edmonton, Alberta:
Jean & Henk Siebenga-De Graaf.
Ina & Garry van Doesburg-De Graaf.
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan:
Cathy & Sid Vander Werff-De Graaf.
Edmonton, Alberta:
Ann & Clarence Wielenga-De Graaf.
Teresa & Tim Jonkmaan-De Graaf.
Calgary, Alberta:
Mona De Graaf.
At home:
Lorraine & (Ken),
Wayne,
Thomas.
And 16 grandchildren.
7716 - 86 Ave.,
Edmonton, Alberta.

Grotegast, December 2nd, 1947.

Praise the Lord for His many rich blessings to

RIEMER TERPSTRA
and
IKE TERPSTRA (FOKKEMA)

during their 25 years of walking together in His light. We pray this Gracious God to grant His nearness and guidance as they continue their walk together.

Herman, Sandy and Teresa Karreman, Langley, B.C.
Joe and Grace Vanderheyden, Kitchener, Ontario.
Sid and Edward — at home.
4838 Linden Drive,
Delta, B.C.
December 2nd, 1972.

On December 18, 1972, the Lord willing, we hope to celebrate with our parents and grandparents

JACOB HARM THALEN
and
JOHANNA THALEN
nee OOTJES

their 25th wedding anniversary.

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless them in their future years as they have been in the past.

Their children:
Harry & Jenny Thalen,
Trevor Jacob,
Guelph, Ont.
Nelly & Frank Bergman,
Jason Brad,
Woodstock, Ont.
At home:
Eric,
Jack,
Hilda,
Jo-Anne.
82 Cedar St.,
Guelph, Ont.

WANNEER ZAL 'T ZIJN?

Als U binnenkort gaat trouwen of wanneer U spoedig een jubileum mag vieren, in beide gevallen zal het voor Uw vele vrienden en bekenden een aangename verrassing zijn, een annonce ervan in hun eigen krant, Calvinist-Contact te lezen.

OTTAWA REPORT: A NEW PARLIAMENT

by Norman Campbell — Parliamentary Press Gallery

(Canadian Scene) — All signs point to winter without a general election. But what happens come March or April is anybody's guess.

The Trudeau ministry will be first in the history of Canada to face the House of Commons after a general election in which it won the popular vote in only one province There can be no doubt on the basis of figures (which at the time of this writing are unofficial) that the Liberals lost nine of the 10 provinces, but may have just eked out 50 per cent of the vote in Quebec.

Figures show the popular vote nationally to have been 3,679,021 Liberal and 3,357,094 Progressive Conservative. But in Quebec the popular vote was 1,257,042 Liberal and only 452,343 for the Progressive Conservatives. In the rest of the country the vote was 3,124,751 Progressive Conservative and 2,421,979 Liberal. Put another way, the popular vote, excluding Quebec, was 34.6 per cent Liberal to 45.3 per cent Progressive Conservative.

Concrete results from the drubbing the Liberals took were not long in coming First was the announcement that there would be a new regulation (perhaps a statute change) to reassure senior unilingual (in fact Englishspeaking) public servants that they will not suffer because of the bi ingual policy. Secondly there was the announcement that the policy of permitting visitors to Canada to apply for citizenship would be abandoned.

How strongly the election results indicated these things were the causes of Liberal losses is debatable. It is true that in the immediate Ottawa area three Liberal seats went to the Conservatives. But in other constituencies such as Kingston, Leeds and Northumberland where the Public Service is not a major factor, Conservative votes bounded up even higher.

And surely immigration policies would have affected the outcome in Montreal, but there the swing was all to the Government.

Parliament will assemble in January, and the throne speech will undoubtedly contain legislative proposals flowing from the election. Mr. Trudeau will ask for a vote of confidence. There is no doubt that he will get it: the Social Crediters and the New Democratic Party will give support in the measure needed to avert a Government defeat.

The church will come when Finance Minister John Turner puts his financial proposals before the House. Then the NDP will be face-to-face with its demand for harsher treatment for the so-called "corporate welfare bums". The Government can hardly give in to a demand couched in that language. Mr. Lewis could seek to word a no-confidence motion in such a way that the Progressive Conservatives could not support it. But the PC's can look back to a precedent set by the Liberals who, in 1962, supported a want-of-confidence motion against the Diefenbaker government. The motion offered by the Social Crediters called for debt-free money, a slogan anathema to the Liberals even had they understood what it meant. Nevertheless the Liberals were determined to defeat the Government lined up behind the Socreds.

Anything can happen in the Parliament just elected. There seems to be agreement on only one thing — it shouldn't be allowed to happen for a few months. But come next Spring the odds appear to be that Canadians will be into another general election campaign.

Geheel onverwachts is van ons heengegaan mijn innig geliefde man en zorgzame vader en grootvader

KLAAS DRIJER,

op de leeftijd van 60 jaar.

(2 Cor. 5 vs. 1)

J. Drijer-De Jong,
Peter & Ann Drijer
John & Janice
Amos, Quebec.
Arthur
John
Sophia
Frances.

Smithville, Ont., R.R. 3.
1 December 1972.

We express our deepest sympathy to the family K. DRYER of Smithville, Ont. on the passing away of their beloved husband and father.

May the Lord sustain them.

Ps. 23:1.

The friends from Burlington, Ont.:
Mr. & Mrs. J. Broersma
Mr. & Mrs. W. Van Aalst
Mr. & Mrs. J. Lycklama
Mr. & Mrs. W. Zuidema
Mr. & Mrs. K. Procé.

Op 1 December 1970 hat ûs himmelske Heit, in har 95e jier thûs helle, us leave mem, skoanmem en beppe,

BOUKJE TEN KATE,
geb. VISSER,

sûnt 1931 widdow fen Bonne Ten Kate en oer de jieren foargien by 5 bern.

Sa't hjar libben west hat, wier hjar stjerren: us foargean.

Wy scille har misse, mar treurje net.

Ut namme fen de nog 10 libjende bern mei oantrouwden, de 56 beppesizzers, de 106 oer-beppesizzers en 1 oer-oer-beppesizzer in Nederlân, Australië en Kanada,

Famylje Brandt Bylsma,
149 Victoria Terrace,
Clinton (Ont.).
Famylje Martin Boonstra,
62 Clive Ave.,
Guelph (Ont.).

De te-hôf bringing hat west op 4 December te Seisbjirrum.

In His infinite wisdom it pleased the Lord to take from us our beloved son, brother and uncle

JOHN M. JANSSENS,

at the age of 38.

Dear son of
Mr. & Mrs. A. Janssens, Wellandport, Ont.

Brother of
Roelie & Elwood Bootsma, Brampton, Ont.
Hank & Gay Janssens, Beamsville, Ont.
Henry & Leny Janssens, Hamilton, Ont.
Andy & Dea Janssens, Hamilton, Ont.
Helen & Jack Hagen, Mount Hope, Ont.
Jane & Peter Elgersma, Ottawa, Ont.
Ralph & Dorothy Janssens, Wellandport, Ont.
Harry Janssens, Wellandport, Ont.

Nieces and nephews.

November 30, 1972.

On November 30, 1972, our Heavenly Father took unto Himself our beloved husband and father

JOHN M. JANSSENS,

at the age of 38.

Beloved husband of Hilda De Jong.

Dear daddy of
Sandy
Glenda
Andy
Francine
Sonya.

Phil. 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me."

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357 Upper Paradise Rd., Hamilton 43. Phone (416) 389-0344.

Write or phone for definite appointment.

ACCOUNTANT

resuired for accounting and income tax firm in Southwestern Ontario.

Must have experience and be enrolled in recognized accounting course.

Salary will commensurate with experience.

Reply in own handwriting giving details of self and experience.

Letters to No. 3109, % Calvinist-Contact, Box 312, Station B, Hamilton, Ont.

TEACHERS WANTED

Due to an unforeseen situation the London District Christian Secondary School will need a

PART-TIME TEACHER

for Mathematics, Science and Typewriting effective Jan. 30, 1973. For further information please write the principal, W. Drost at 24 Braesyde Ave., London 35, Ont.

Immanuel Christian School, 802 - 6 Ave. N., Lethbridge, Alta., requires a

TEACHER FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

immediately, or commencing the second semester. Teachers with experience will be preferred. Send all letters of inquiry to Mr. H. Konynenbelt, principal, or call 1-403-328-4783 or 1-403-328-7195.

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with part-time and full-time quotas.

Calves, veal and hog operation, 14 acres, good buildings.

Glass greenhouse operation, city conveniences, 12,000 sq. ft., built in 1971.

Good Homes for retirement.

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14,000 CHICKEN broiler quota, automatic feeding. 10 acres land. Excellent buildings close to Town; City water and gas. Last crop profit $4,300. 4½ crops per year. See this one, You will love it. $110,000.

27 ACRES FRUIT plus 6,000 chicken broilers. Approximately $20,000 per year income and will increase as fruit trees grow larger. Cold storage and all equipment included at $98,000.

25,000 CHICKEN broilers. Excellent buildings. Large down payment required. 12 acres fruit plus 108,000 lb. turkey quota. Automatic feeders. Good buildings. Machinery included. Approximately $20,000 per year income. Paved road. 2 miles to stores, $96,000. Call Ronald Babcock at

A. S. KIMBERLEY LTD.
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Due to increased enrollment the John Knox Christian School of Woodstock is in need of a

PRIMARY TEACHER

Starting date: as soon as possible. Please, send your application to the principal, R. Vander Ploeg, 1045 Prkinson Road, Woodstock, Ont.

Due to unforeseen circumstances Duncan Christian School is in need of

A TEACHER

Send applications to the Principal, Mr. H. J. Bulthuis, 1050 Prevost Rd., Duncan, B.C. Phone (604) 748-9725.

Calvin Memorial Christian School requires a

PRIMARY TEACHER

commencing February 1st, 1973. Experience preferred. Send application to Mr. John Stronks, 300 Scott Street, St. Catharines, Ont.

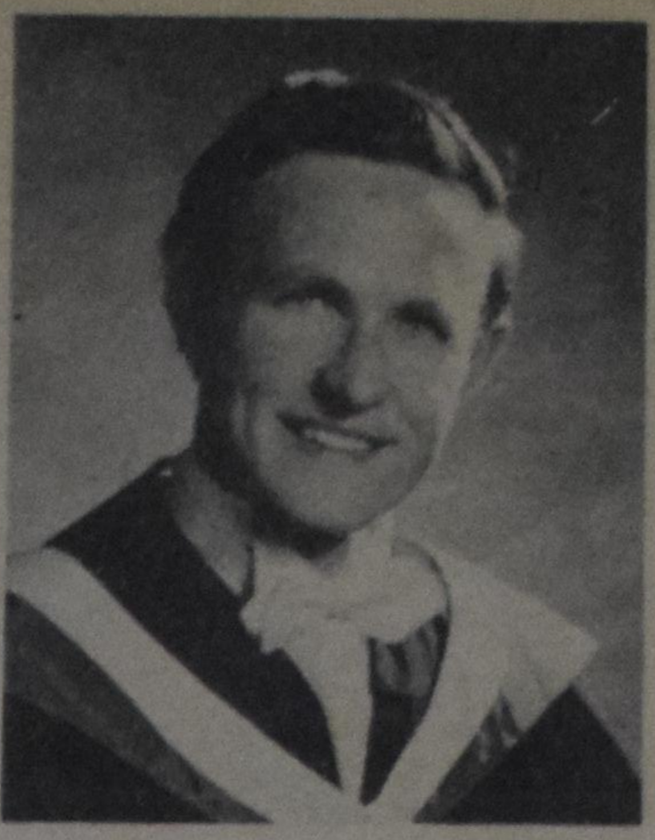
MUSIC TEACHER

by Jan. 2, 1973

The Calvin Christian School Society of Hamilton, operating Calvin Christian School, is in urgent need of a Music teacher.

Calvin Christian has a staff of 14 and an enrolment of 360. Our present Music teacher must return to the U.S.A. due to family reasons. The position is 5 half days. Salary commensurate with experience. Please forward complete resume to:

W. H. Hultink, Principal
Calvin Christian School,
547 West Fifth Street,
Hamilton 41, Ont.
Phone: 1-416-385-2045.



Mr. John Hofstee, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Hofstee of St. Thomas, Ont., graduated from Waterloo Lutheran University recently. Mr. Hofstee majored in econimics and business. He is now teaching at the Listowel (Ont.) District Secondary School.

NIEUWE 1973

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 14 — Discovery IV, Dr. A. DeGraaff, in Toronto. Dr. DeGraaff will focus on the Elijah cycle of I Kings 17-19. Time: 8:00 p.m. Place: Willowdale Christian Reformed Church, 70 Hilda Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario.

Dec. 14 — The multi-media magic of Robert Brouwer presents "Spring Captures Holland", at the Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute in Scarborough, Ont. (550 Markham Road). Tickets at the door: adult, $1.50; student 75¢. Sponsored by the Immanuel Christian School.

Children's Choir, Bowmanville Choir, Toronto Choir, Orchestra and Band, under the direction of Leendert Kooij will give concerts on

Dec. 16 — in Bowmanville, Ont.

Dec. 26 — in the Knox Presbyterian Church, 630 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Dec. 16 — Christmas Concert and Organ Recital performed by Peter Spoelstra, A.R.C.T., First Chr. Ref. Church, Hamilton, Ont., Charlton & Hess Sts., 8:15 p.m. Free admission.

Dec. 16, 17 — The Grimsby Chr. Choral Society will perform the Oratorio, "The Birth of Christ" under the direction of Gezinus E. Hoekstra in the Grimsby Chr. Ref. Church on the 16th and in the Trinity Chr. Ref. Church in St. Catharines on the 17th.

Dec. 17 — The Brampton Chr. Choral Soc. "Praise the Lord" presents the Christmas Cantate "Story of Bethlehem", in the Second Chr. Ref. Church, Steeles & McLaughlin Rd. S., 8 p.m.

Dec. 29 — 8 p.m. Wine and Cheese party of the Hamilton District Christian High School Alumni in the High School Auditorium.

Jan. 12 — Edmonton, Alta. The AACS presents Discovery IV on the theme "The Word of God Stands Forever". In this third presentation Dr. Calvin Seerveld will focus on hearing afresh the Word of God in Ecclesiastes, (see local announcements for time and place).

Jan. 13 — Discovery IV, Dr. C. Seerveld, in Vancouver, B.C. (see local announcements).

Jan. 15 — Discovery IV, Dr. C. Seerveld, in Grand Rapids, Mich. (see local announcements).

Jan. 18 — Discovery IV, Dr. C. Seerveld, in Toronto, Ont. 8:00 p.m., Willowdale Chr. Ref. Church, 70 Hilda Ave., Willowdale, Ont.

Jan. 19 — Discovery IV, Dr. C. Seerveld, In St. Catharines, Ont. 8:00 p.m., Calvin Memorial Chr. School, 300 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont.

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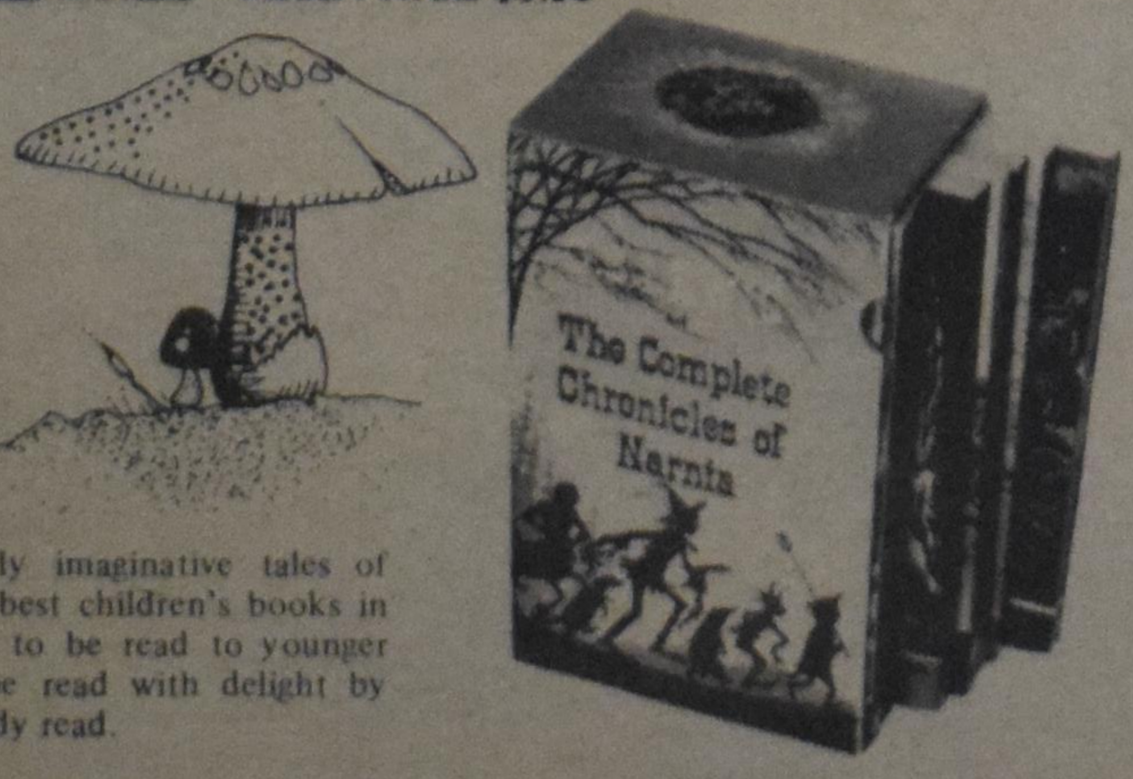

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